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# Some Aspects of the Dramatic Art of Aeschylus

BY

RUFUS TOWN STEPHENSON

PROFESSOR OF CLASSICS  
COLLEGE OF THE PACIFIC

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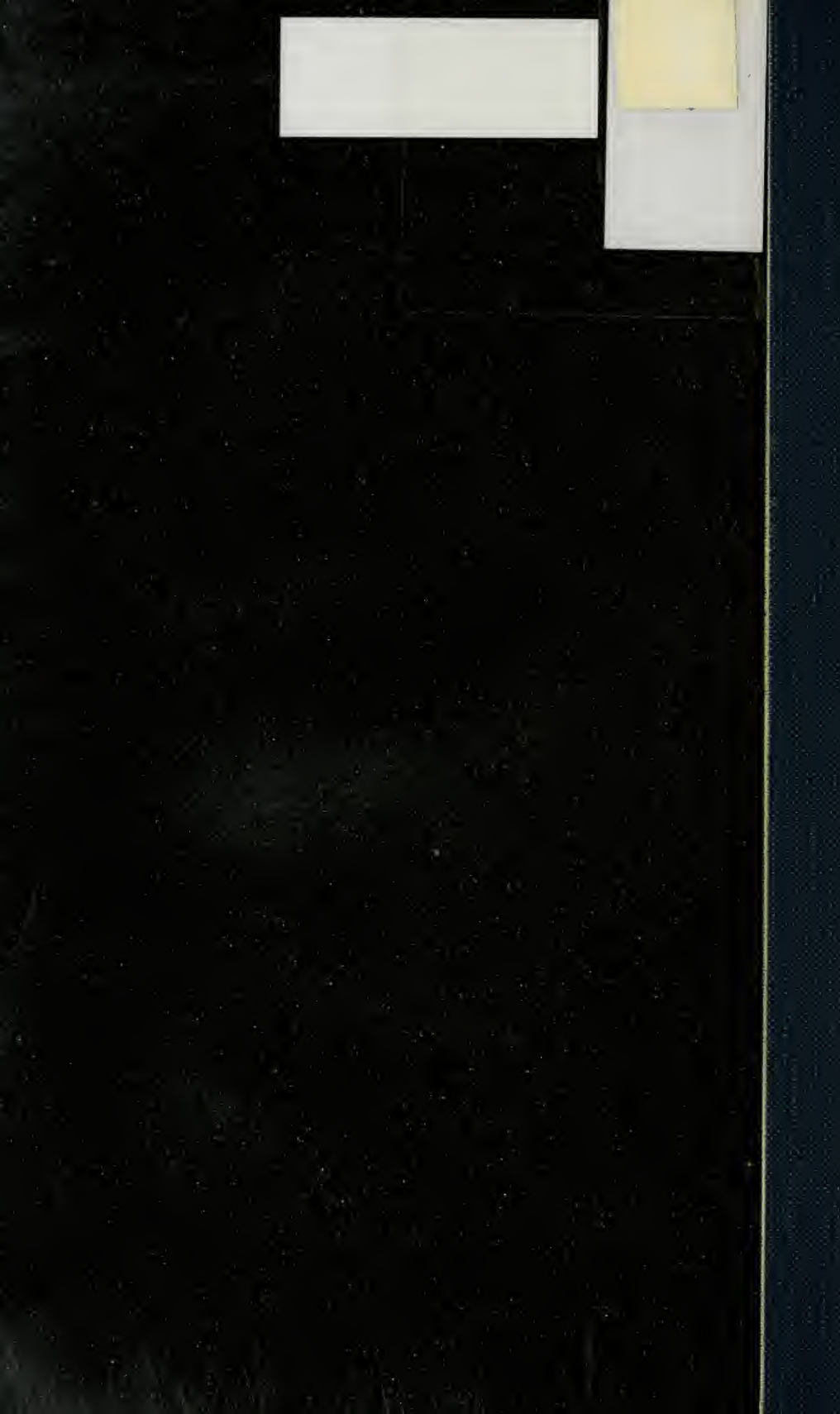
A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of  
Leland Stanford Junior University  
for the

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
1909

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### PREFATORY NOTE.

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I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Augustus T. Murray, in whose Seminar I began to work on some of the literary problems handled in these pages. The subject was one he gave me, and for a number of suggestions I express my hearty thanks.

R. T. S.

SAN JOSE, CAL., JUNE 23, 1913.

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## SOME ASPECTS OF THE DRAMATIC ART OF AESCHYLUS

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### DEVICES FOR MOVEMENTS OF ACTORS AND CHORUS.

Under this caption I desire to discuss nine devices or motives for movements of actors and chorus which have been called in question by critics, and two<sup>1</sup> others which will serve for comparison. The questioned ones are found in the four earlier plays. One sees at a glance from their small number that almost all of Aeschylus' characters enter, move about and depart in a way so natural that their motives have passed unchallenged. Many times the reason for a given movement arose so obviously from the situation that the assignment of a reason was rendered unnecessary, *e. g.*, Clytemnestra's stepping out in the Agamemnon (855) to greet her lord. Otherwise the poet gave his audience a reason,<sup>2</sup> *e. g.*, on her entrance in the Choephoroi (734), in answer to the chorus question, "Whither

<sup>1</sup>Devices 7 and 11.

<sup>2</sup>This statement must be understood in the light of the following reservation. In three or four cases in his earlier plays Aeschylus, merely for scenic considerations, brought on an actor with naïve freedom; that is to say, in these few cases he did not feel constrained to make clear just why his actor should appear at the given place at the given time.—See (1) Atossa's entrance (Persians, 159). Out of her anxiety for Xerxes she tells the chorus she has come for advice. To that extent her coming is motivated. But why should she have come to the particular place, Darius' tomb? (For a discussion on scenic arrangements in the Persians see Dignan, *The Idle Actor in Aeschylus*, pp. 16 and 17, where the references are cited).—See (2) Xerxes' en-

bound, Kilissa, dost thou pass the gate?" the nurse replied that the queen had sent her to summon Aigisthus.

These questioned devices have hardly been noticed by the editors (though it would seem that points of dramatic interest in the study of drama are fully as valuable as grammatical minutii); they have, however, engaged the attention of various writers<sup>3</sup> on Aeschylus' literary art, and have been styled "clumsy, forced, transparent pretexts," purely external devices with no or little inner justification. It is generally charged that these devices are due to convention, e.g., the fixed position of the chorus in the orchestra during a stasimon, or to material necessities, at times the paucity of actors, but chiefly the lack of a back-scene in the primitive theatre for unobtrusive coming and going; and to these charges, just in several instances, I would ascribe their full weight. In this chapter, however, I purpose to consider each questionable device on its merits; and, if there is another side—an artistic side—of the case, to state that side; also to show that Aeschylus, the artist, was conscious of the problems before him; that his text proves this by exhibiting traces of an effort on his part to cover up his stage limita-  
trance in the same play (908). It is motived in that the whole play leads inevitably to this entrance, as its climax. But why does the king come home by way of Darius' tomb? Aeschylus does not tell us.—See (3) the entrance of Antigone and Ismene with the corpses in the Septem (860). Why should they go to the Acropolis (where are the chorus) rather than to the royal palace (which must have been off the stage.—See Dignan, *op. cit.*, p. 19)?—See (4) Oceanus' entrance in Prometheus (285). Here perhaps we should take for granted that Oceanus enters for the same reason the Oceanides assigned on their entrance a little earlier, viz., because they have heard the unwonted sounds.

<sup>3</sup>Especially Richter, *Zur Dramaturgie des Aeschylus*, and Dignan, *The Idle Actor in Aeschylus*. Post, in *The Dramatic Art of Aeschylus* (Harvard Studies, Vol. XVI) criticizes one device (Suppliants, 774-775). For a general answer to Dignan see a criticism of his dissertation by Allen in *The Classical Quarterly*, October, 1907.

tions and to render what was in some cases perhaps essentially external, inner and artistic. That he always succeeded no one, of course, can hold. But it remains true that the mechanical and conventional in the early stages of Aeschylus' work have been sometimes so emphasized that whatever artistic touches there are have been overshadowed. To offset this one-sided criticism I desire partly to unveil, if I can, the other side of the picture—the artistic way in which he met convention and limitation.

But before entering upon this discussion I desire to take up an important consideration; for our judgment on these devices, as we shall see, depends partly on our knowledge of Aeschylus' attitude toward the presence of a silent actor during a stasimon. He undoubtedly felt its awkward embarrassment, as Dignan<sup>4</sup> intimates on several pages of his dissertation. He does not, however, collate the plays of Aeschylus for evidence,—a thing which I propose briefly to do. In the *Suppliants*, although Danaus is compelled to be a silent actor during the *parodos*,<sup>5</sup> and although he is still present during the second stasimon (apparently because there was no pretext at hand for his removal), he is sent out in 503 shortly before the third stasimon. Before the singing of this choral song Pelasgus also retires, leaving the stage<sup>6</sup> empty. At 775 Danaus again leaves just before a stasimon. In the *Persians*, Atossa is removed on rather a strained pretext before the first stasimon. Had Aeschylus not on occasion felt offense at an actor's presence during an ode, she might have remained during this stasimon, as she returns just after its close in 618. The poet could easily have kept her on the stage by having her bring the necessary offerings for the dead on her first coming. It is

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit.

<sup>5</sup>See Dignan, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>6</sup>By stage in this study I mean the primitive speaking place. Even the orchestra might, therefore, be the "stage."

true, she is present during the second choral song, where indeed for inner reasons her presence was needed. But here Aeschylus removes all embarrassment by allowing her to pour libations<sup>7</sup> while the chorus call up Darius. Again just before the last stasimon Atossa leaves—even at the cost of a false motive.<sup>8</sup> In the *Septem* it is probable that no actor was present during a stasimon. Dignan<sup>9</sup> undertakes to prove that Eteocles was present during the parodos. But the editors<sup>10</sup> are probably right in indicating his exit after verse 77. This movement is sufficiently motivated by the messenger's suggestion (57 and 78), "In view of this, quickly station at the gates the city's bravest men." Had Eteocles been present during the entire ode, how could he have refrained from reprimanding the chorus of maids sooner,—feeling as strongly as he did the folly of their conduct? In the *Prometheus* the Titan, of course, remained throughout the play; but to obviate the awkwardness of his silence during choral performances, Aeschylus cut them down to minimum proportions.<sup>11</sup> He

<sup>7</sup>Just as Clytemnestra was probably on the stage busy with altar preparations for sacrifice during the parodos of the *Agamemnon*. A closer parallel is found in the *Choephoroi*. During the parodos Electra was busy with the offerings. This is Richter's view, and the one I favor. For an opposite view see Dignan, *op. cit.*, p. 27, note 48. Electra poured these offerings on the grave during the short choral ode that followed (152-163).

<sup>8</sup>Of course another reason for her exit here is that the poet does not wish to humiliate her by participation in the last scene. The suggestion in the Teuffel-Wecklein edition (note on v. 908) that she may have reappeared as a dumb character in the exit, is preposterous.

<sup>9</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup>Paley, Flagg, Verrall and Wecklein. The scholiast agrees with these editors.

<sup>11</sup>This view seems more satisfactory than the one which attributes these short odes to a revision after the poet's death, and also seems a better reason than the one Dignan, *op. cit.*, p. 21 (citing Masqueray,

turned the parodos into a kommos between Prometheus and the chorus. The first stasimon is short, and concerns only the hero of the play.<sup>12</sup> The second stasimon has only two strophies and antistrophies, and is addressed to the Titan, thus relieving him of any embarrassment. The last stasimon is the shortest of all, with only strophe, antistrophe and epode. In the Agamemnon, Cassandra is silent during a stasimon. This was due quite as much to the conditions of the plot<sup>13</sup> as to the limitations<sup>14</sup> of the theatre. The poet, of course, would not, if he could, have lifted that veil of silence, as it is preparing the way by very contrast for the wonderful scene to follow. In the Choephoroi, Electra does not furnish us during the parodos with a clear case of the idle actor.<sup>15</sup> Much of the ode may have been sung before the chorus reached the orchestra, and during the latter part of the parodos Electra was busy with the offerings.<sup>16</sup> During the following ode (151-163) she was present pouring libations. Such employment would have relieved the scene of any embarrassment, but this choral song is too short to be reckoned in this connection. In the Eumenides, clinging to the base of Athene's statue, Orestes was present on the stage during the second parodos

*Théorie des formes lyriques de la tragédie grecque*, p. 79), gives: "The brevity of the choral parts may be due simply to the unimportance of the chorus and the supreme interest of the central figure." Dignan adds, however, on the next page: "The situation is, of course, exceptional—Prometheus must remain throughout; but in various ways the awkwardness of his presence during choral passages is rendered less noticeable." He then cites about the same evidence as I shall give in support of my view.

<sup>12</sup>This affords the best example of the Pathetic Fallacy in Aeschylus.

<sup>13</sup>See Allen, loc. cit., p. 271.

<sup>14</sup>Dignan's view., op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>15</sup>See Allen, loc. cit., p. 272. Dignan, op. cit., p. 27, is right, however, in saying that Electra enters with the chorus.

<sup>16</sup>See Richter, op. cit., p. 215.

and the two succeeding odes.<sup>17</sup> This arrangement Aeschylus did not try to avoid, one can readily see, as it was the only natural one. The Erinyes and their victim must be together until the verdict delivers Orestes from their hands.

To sum up Aeschylus' attitude toward the presence of a silent actor during a stasimon:—Aeschylus allowed Orestes on the stage during lyrical parts because his staying, far from causing embarrassment, was demanded by the conditions of the plot. Conditions of the plot also demanded Cassandra's silence during the stasimon in the Agamemnon. Atossa, Clytemnestra and Electra (the latter during a short ode, at any rate) were all silent actors,—but with stage business which relieved embarrassment. Of such instances of the silent actor our poet evidently did not try to rid himself. No other instances, however, are found in the Persians, Septem, Agamemnon, Choephoroi and Eumenides. In the Prometheus, moreover, he consciously shunned the idle actor (who would be Prometheus, were there a long stasimon); and we may be sure of this, for he has taken pains to reduce the choral parts to a minimum reached in no other extant drama. Even in the Suppliants, although his earliest extant play, if, notwithstanding that fact, we may judge from the cumulative evidence of all the plays,

<sup>17</sup>So the schol.: ἡ μὲν Ἀθηνᾶ ἀπῆλθεν εὐτρεπίσαι δικαστάς, ὁ δὲ Ὀρέστης ἱκετεύων μένει, αἱ δὲ Ἑρινύες φρουροῦσιν αὐτόν. Verrall, in his Appendix I (p. 185), dissents, and asserts that Orestes left the scene; adding that the directions (vv. 485 ff.) given by Athene before her departure, that the parties are to summon their witnesses and evidence, not only point to Orestes' exit but also to that of the chorus. Sidgwick (see his note on 566) agrees that Orestes left the stage. But consider the evidence of τοῦδε (493) which Verrall wrongly translates "yon"; also the words spoken by Orestes just after his arrival at Athena's temple, αὐτοῦ φυλάσσω ἀμμενῶ τέλος δίκης (243). If Orestes went out for Apollo, the god should return with him; but Verrall makes Apollo return some verses after Orestes—an arrangement inconsistent with his argument.



and add the weight of this evidence to the fact that in the play itself the stage was empty of an actor for two choral odes, Aeschylus tried to avoid this silent actor. But in two places he seems to have been unable to find a satisfactory pretext for Danaus' withdrawal, and he accordingly remains on the stage. In Aeschylus, therefore, the strictly lyrical and speaking parts of drama were well differentiated; and while not always so, were usually mutually exclusive.

I shall now discuss the delayed devices in the order of their appearance in the plays. I call these passages devices, rather than motives, as they may or may not contain a motive arising from the internal development of the drama. If, on the one hand, they are in a high sense artistic, they will, of course, contain a real inner reason of the poet, although there may be an even more compelling outer one; if, on the other, they are of a low artistic value, in them we shall find a pretext only, with the real external reason for their appearance but poorly concealed.

*First Device—to get rid of Danaus* (Suppliants, 480 ff.). —Danaus is sent off the stage to lay olive branches on the city altars, that, as the king says, the people may know of the arrival of suppliants and be moved to kindly feelings. Dignan<sup>18</sup> says: "The device for his removal is a transparent one, for the pretext on which he is removed is forced." Again<sup>19</sup> he speaks of it as a "most artificial pretext." That the device is used for an external reason in part at least, *i.e.*, to get Danaus off the stage before the stasimon, is true. But he was surely sent on this errand for internal reasons of the drama as well. No doubt the king did want a sentiment aroused in favor of the girls before he spoke on their behalf. In portraying a king so careful of the popular will, Aeschylus is guilty of an anachronism, we may grant, but one that may be easily

<sup>18</sup>Op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>19</sup>P. 31.

pardoned, for it was the only kind of king that could have pleased his audience. What more natural for such a king than to dispatch Danaus on such an errand? By what touch, too, could the poet better paint good judgment in the king's character? Psychologically the king was right. Danaus' strange presence in the streets of Argos, and his suppliant branches with their silent appeal, would create just that atmosphere of sympathy needed, when the assembly should convene.<sup>20</sup> The conclusion may well be, then, not that Aeschylus used here an external device with slight or no internal justification, but rather that he has employed as motive a king's request, called for by inner grounds,—at such time, however, in the dramatic economy of his play that it might serve an external need as well, viz., the removal of an actor before a stasimon.

*Second Device—to get rid of Danaus* (Suppliants, 726 ff. and 774-775).—After 775 Danaus again leaves the stage on the pretext of getting the promised help, for the pursuers have already arrived in the harbor. Post<sup>21</sup> makes this criticism: "Once in the play we find Aeschylus put at a disadvantage by the limitation to only two actors. In order that the herald and the king may be on the stage at the same time, it is necessary that Danaus leave, and so at 775 he makes a conventional excuse of going once more to plead with the Argives." Now there are evidently two external reasons for such departure: (1) that the stage may be unembarrassed with a silent actor during the stasimon; (2) that the poet may have his requisite two actors for the dialogue which follows. But there is also an important inner reason for his leaving. Seeing that there was a goodly band in pursuit (see especially 721), Danaus must have felt his inability to meet them single-handed. He, therefore, wished the king informed at once, that he might

<sup>20</sup>Tucker, in his edition of this play, observes that the king knew that kindly feelings would "later crystallize into a decree."

<sup>21</sup>Loc. cit., p. 34.



bring troops immediately, even if by so doing he must leave<sup>22</sup> his daughters for the moment unprotected.<sup>23</sup> Of course, if Aeschylus at this time had been able to employ a third actor,<sup>24</sup> Danaus would have returned with the king and been present at the rebuff of the Egyptians. The statement that the external reason here for his departure is stronger than the internal, is undoubtedly true. The limited number of actors simply compelled his exit. The king's entrance with help might have been effected by some other means; *e. g.*, he might have been near by when the girls made outcry, and entered, stating that their shouts had brought him. For those, however, who are as willing to see art as convention—and art in convention, an important point here is this: Aeschylus, under the necessity of removing Danaus, does so on strong inner grounds which are quite natural. Herein he showed his art, by making at this juncture of his drama so happy a meeting between outer and inner reason.

*Third Device—for Danaus' recall* (Suppliants, 968 ff.).—There is a motive in the last part of the Suppliants which has

<sup>22</sup>Of course the very early convention of the drama probably made it absolutely impossible for the girls to accompany their father, thus leaving the orchestra and making a change of scene. The only well established scene change in Aeschylus' extant plays is in the Eumenides. A few others, however, have been proposed which I shall discuss in another connection.

<sup>23</sup>A careful reading of the text shows that the herald was attended. The sons of Aegyptus were not with the herald, as he says (in 928) that he will return to make report to them. Then, too, had they been present, the chorus would not continually have used the second person singular in their address. The herald, however, must have been accompanied by some swarthy attendants. Hence the terror aroused in the girls, and hence the herald's threat of violence. See Tucker's edition for a like note on this passage. Richter, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21, takes about the same position.

<sup>24</sup>See Dignan, *op. cit.*, note 23 at bottom of p. 15.

been questioned by at least one critic. Richter<sup>25</sup> argues that the action of the play comes to an end at verse 965; that the dialogue, which follows and calls for Danaus' return, is mere patchwork, the question of a dwelling place being a matter uninteresting to the audience, and one which Danaus (when he does return) does not answer; that this question, therefore, is only a poor device of the poet for bringing back the father, who, as already suggested, would have returned with the king in the scene with the Egyptian had not the poet been limited to two actors.<sup>26</sup> He further adds that Aeschylus hardly had enough material for a whole play, and accordingly added verses 980 ff., for which there is no poetic justification; that interesting episodes are much better than tiresome unmotivated speeches; and that Aeschylus bungled here from a pure dramatic standpoint, though we are compensated by the excellence of the final choral song and processional exit.<sup>27</sup> We may grant at once that our poet was unable to introduce Danaus with the king on account of the paucity of his actors; that Danaus' presence was absolutely needed to bring the play to a satisfactory conclusion; that the question of residence referred by the girls to their father is the device which Aeschylus used for Danaus' recall. Now, is it, or is it not, artistic? Did a purely external reason demand it, or, now that Danaus is absent, did inner grounds call for the motive which led to the conversation between father and daughters in the last scene? The passage evidently must be understood in the light of the words which precede and follow—"Send hither our father, doubtly Danaus, to plan for us. . . .

<sup>25</sup>Op. cit., pp. 121-122.

<sup>26</sup>The herald probably changed his dress and came back as Danaus. See Rees, *Rule of Three Actors*, p. 30.

<sup>27</sup>I feel it necessary to state these grounds of objection in full, as our judgment on them vitally affects our estimate of the Suppliants as an early art form.

every one is ready to cast reproach upon strange folk; but may the best prevail." The question about a place of habitation, therefore, is typical; only one of the many questions introduced by their surroundings which they would refer to their father. He had been their constant companion on the long sea voyage, the leader of their flight thus far,—so they would not enter a strange city without him. Richter states that we are not interested in the dwelling-place question; but surely the audience was interested in it to the slight extent to which it was introduced—they certainly wanted to see the girls safely settled—and quite interested in the problem for which it stands,—their general well-being, for which a father's presence was needed.

Again Danaus' speech (980 ff.) is not tiresome, but to the point and interesting. At its beginning he tells the audience something new; that an escort of spearmen has been accorded him for his honor and protection. Then his words of warning to the girls about conduct (which Richter says are uncalled for) are quite natural, as well as beautifully expressed; for it was a primitive age, and they were strange maids in a strange land. Pelasgus, it is true, had already assured them of his and the state's protection; but they also needed paternal care. These fatherly admonitions are just as much in place here as are verses of a like tenor in an earlier part of the play (197-199). There is, therefore, a natural justification for these words,—and a poetic one as well, for they furnish the poet a theme for several exquisite verses (996-1009). Furthermore, Danaus does handle the question of habitation on his return; he does not directly answer it on the stage (how could he, before going into the city and examining the abodes in question?), but he repeats the information of Pelasgus (doubtless ignorant that the king had already given it), that homes of the people and Pelasgus' own are at their disposal—rent free. This indicates that this and probably all

other questions pertaining to the girls' welfare are in a father's hands; and this is just the assurance a friendly audience wanted at the end of the play.

The conclusion, then, is that Aeschylus did not seriously bungle here from a pure dramatic standpoint, for there were inner grounds for Danaus' return; that the father's speech would have been essentially as it is, had he been present all along, *i. e.*, that the poet did not give it to him simply to justify his recall; that, moreover, his words further the situation and bring to a more satisfying conclusion the reception of the Danaids in Argos, which in fact is the subject of the drama.

*Fourth Device—for Atossa's removal* (Persians, 522-524).—Here Aeschylus evidently wished to remove Atossa before the stasimon, and he gives her this pretext for going back to the palace (which was off the stage): "First I wish to make prayer to the gods,—afterwards I shall return with libations for the dead." Evidently he fails in his attempt here to assign a real inner motive.<sup>28</sup> No inner motive sends her off only to return in a few minutes at the conclusion of the ode. The necessary offerings could have been brought with her on her first appearance,<sup>29</sup> and she could have prayed to all the major gods at the tomb before pouring the libations. Here Aeschylus (though he tried, as the text shows) could arrange no happy meeting between an outer and an inner end, and is guilty of poor motivation. It is, of course, easy to pardon him on account of the meager and awkward scenic arrangements at his disposal.

<sup>28</sup>Dignan, *op. cit.*, p. 25, says of this and of the next device for Atossa's removal: "Twice she is explicitly sent off on clumsy pretexts."

<sup>29</sup>It has been suggested that Atossa did not have the sacrifice in mind when she left the palace the first time. But is it not more than likely that the queen carried offerings for Darius on most of her visits to his tomb—even without special occasion?

*Fifth Device—for Atossa's removal* (Persians, 849-851). *False motivation.*—In the Persians (849-851) we have a case of so-called false<sup>30</sup> motivation. Atossa leaves the stage on the pretext of meeting her son and giving him whole clothing to replace his rent garments. This she does at Darius' suggestion (829-831). Darius also directs the chorus (in the same three verses) to admonish Xerxes to cease from presumptuous and godless ways. These two directions of the ghost are nowhere carried out, although according to Atossa's words she leaves the stage to carry out her part of the instructions. Verse 1030, πέπλον δ' ἐπέροηξ' ἐπὶ συμφορᾷ κακοῦ, makes it unlikely that Aeschylus wished his audience to take for granted the fulfillment of Atossa's words during the interval of the choral ode. The torn robe would naturally be the one Xerxes has on, as there could have been no attendant<sup>31</sup> (cf. 1036) to carry the tattered garment he had just cast off (Hermann's view<sup>32</sup>). Furthermore, ever since the battle of Salamis the story of Xerxes' passion and rent robes had passed current in Greece, whenever the history of that battle was the subject of discussion. Aeschylus, therefore, when he brought on his drama eight years later, could hardly have done other than introduce the Xerxes of the Greek imagination.<sup>33</sup> As to the other suggestion of Darius—the chorus make no effort to carry it out. They engage in one long "howling duet" with the man who has "crowded Hades with Persians"—there is no admonition to sane-mindedness—and with this scene the play ends. These

<sup>30</sup>False, of course, when we judge the poet,—not when we judge Atossa. One can, therefore, defend false motivation here, as in such a case the character is not guilty of deception or untruth.

<sup>31</sup>The statement in the Teuffel-Wecklein edition that several warriors accompanied him, is wrong.

<sup>32</sup>See the second volume of his edition (p. 250), where he says that Xerxes entered with royal garments, a servant following with the tattered ones.

<sup>33</sup>For the opposite view see in Prickard's edition his note on 906.

difficulties have led two critics, Kochly and Bergk, to the conclusion that the original end of the play has been lost. Richter<sup>34</sup> tries to lay this failure of agreement between promise and fulfillment, in large measure, to the episodic character of the Darius scene. He says that the actor who took Atossa's part was also to take that of Xerxes; adding, however, that this is only a partial excuse for the poet, since Atossa's exit should be free from all objection. To the writer, the scene in which Darius figures does not seem in any real sense an episode. Aeschylus is guilty—and, I think, intentionally,<sup>35</sup> of false motivation. Atossa's departure, in order to shield her boy from what disgrace she could, seemed to Aeschylus so natural at the time of the mother's exit, so in keeping with her character, that he adopted this inner reason—even at the cost of its non-fulfillment. There were two external reasons for the queen's removal: one, due to the poet's preference—that she might not be present during the stasimon; another (relatively external), due to the demands of the plot—that the queen might not be humiliated by participation in the last scene.<sup>36</sup> As was his wont, Aeschylus balanced these outer reasons with an inner one—so plausible and satisfying that, as we shall see, his literary conscience seems to have required nothing further—intention fulfilled. When Xerxes entered in his tattered condition, the spectator thought, "Well, the good mother didn't have time to meet him," and with that—the matter ended. The fact is, in this case, false motivation was, perhaps, justifiable from both the artistic and moral standpoint; it

<sup>34</sup>See op. cit., p. 19: "Es liegt eben im Wesen der Episode dass den Anregungen zur Handlung in dem weiteren Fortgange des Dramas keine Folge gegeben wird."

<sup>35</sup>He did not intend for Atossa to carry out her purpose, so he purposely puts in her lips *πειράσσομαι*.

<sup>36</sup>Dignan, op. cit., note 32, pp. 18-19, says that had she been allowed to remain, "she would have disturbed the balance of one to one," and that this external cause was the chief reason for her removal.



relieved the situation at this juncture in the Persians admirably and in a way that leaves little to be desired. The poet would paint Atossa favorably, Xerxes unfavorably. The queen, therefore, must leave with the expressed intention of shielding her boy, but she must not carry it out—there must not be time. The Persian monarch must enter, in plight as pitiable outwardly as inwardly, and in utter humiliation, balance the terror he had inspired so short a time before.

*Sixth Device—for Eteocles' removal* (Septem, 283)—*and the same device* (Septem, 57-58).—An instance of alleged false motivation<sup>37</sup> may be found in the Septem (283). Eteocles gives as his pretext for leaving the stage before the stasimon his determination to "go with other six champions and meet the enemy." This device contains a splendid inner motive. But after the choral ode he comes on the stage again, without the assignment of any reason as to why he has not carried out his intention, to hear his messenger's report. It is only on its conclusion that he goes forth to victory and death. The fact is, he probably left the stage at verse 78 on the same pretext<sup>38</sup>—to carry out the messenger's suggestion (57-58): "In view of this, quickly stations at the gate the city's bravest men." This triple use of a motive (for it is again used on his final exit) which could, under ordinary circumstances at least, be used only once, seems to have given Aeschylus no offense.<sup>39</sup> Indeed it need give us little, if we get Aeschylus' probable point of view. We must remember that Eteocles was interrupted while actually carrying out his task, in each case; first, by the outcries of the maidens, and second, by the

<sup>37</sup>See Richter, *op. cit.*, p. 44. I hope the preceding discussion has shown that false motivation is not in every case necessarily a very serious blemish in dramatic technique, even if proved.

<sup>38</sup>So Paley, Verrall, Flagg, Tucker and Wecklein in their editions. For an opposite view see Dignan, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>39</sup>For, had he felt it a blunder the second time he used it, there is no likelihood he would have repeated it.

report of the herald, who might naturally enough come back to the acropolis (where he left the king) to make report.<sup>40</sup> These three reasons for his exit were given in good faith, therefore, although their repetition in this way may seem to us a little awkward, for Aeschylus gives us no hint, as we might expect, of interruption and resumption. We conclude, then, that our poet cannot fairly be accused of false motivation here; nor can a charge be made of any serious impropriety.

*Seventh Device—for the removal of the δούλης* (Choeph. 889).—*False motivation.*—We come now to another device with intention unfulfilled. False motivation it is, and again an example of its use—so admirable that we almost feel that false motivation can justify itself—at least in Aeschylus. The poet does not wish the device fulfilled, as that would spoil the external purpose of its utterance; yet it was the most natural thing to be uttered at the time, as we shall see. The outer motive is, of course, to get rid of the servant;<sup>41</sup> and when were outer and inner motive ever more happily combined? It

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<sup>40</sup>So Verrall's note on 269 (283 in the traditional text): "Eteocles now hurries to resume preparations commenced after verse 78 and interrupted by the cries of the maidens at 180."

<sup>41</sup>The scholiast tells us that the purpose of the device is external—to avoid the necessity for four actors, enabling the actor representing the servant to take the part of Pylades a little later. This may be the correct view. Richter, *op. cit.*, p. 217, objects that only five verses intervene between the servant's speech (886) and Orestes' reappearance (892), probably rightly assuming (Verrall to the contrary) that Pylades accompanied his friend; and that only two verses really intervene to give lapse of time, as the device for removal does not come until 889; and his objections carry much weight, although it should be remembered that it would require little time to change an upper garment and mask (see Capp's review in *Am. Jour. Arch.*, 1905, p. 496 ff.), if that were all the change an ancient "make up" demanded. Most of the critics, however, as Elmsley and Beer, think the full thirteen verses are consumed, and regard thirteen trimeters as representing the minimum time for such a change. See Rees, *op. cit.*, p. 51. There are two



is quite what we would expect a woman of strong masculine character like Clytemnestra, to cry out: δοίη τις ἀνδροκμήτα πέλεκυν ὡς τάχος. Compare a like masculine touch in the Agamemnon, 1421-1425 (especially verse 1423). A further reading of the play shows, however, that the servant did not carry out the suggestion. Indeed, his re-appearance was the last thing the poet desired, as he wished Clytemnestra and Orestes (with Pylades, who was but a mute save for the speaking of three verses) to be alone in the solemn scene of judgment that follows. No audience, in this case, would demand

other possible cases of a quick change from one character to another in Aeschylus: one in the Suppliants, if we assume there were only two actors (see Rees, p. 30), where the king would come back (after five verses) as Danaus; and another in Prometheus, if we assume a dummy (a view objectionable to me) where Hephaestus has seven verses during which to leave the stage, get to the rear of the lay-figure, and appear in his new role. Inasmuch as processional arrangements probably gave quite an interval of time in the Suppliants, and no change of costume was called for in the Prometheus, the actors in each would probably have had all the time they needed. All this discussion is aside the mark, however, if Rees is right in holding that the rule of three actors simply forbade a fourth speaking person, the Greek stage manager usually distributing the roles to a suitable number of different actors. Granting that he has discredited the old tradition, which has asserted the limitation of the number of actors, Aeschylus had more than three actors at his disposal in the Choephoroi, and the passage under discussion is greatly simplified. In that case the device still serves for the removal of the servant, as his later presence on the stage is in the highest degree undesirable; but he need not and does not return (after a character change) as Pylades.

A possible objection against interpreting the device in the way I have, might be that the οἰκέτης, being an ἐξάγγελος, would need no motive for exit. I will state in reply that the situation here is a very unusual one. The queen herself is in extreme danger, as this servant must know. Without Clytemnestra's request, he would surely have remained on the stage. He might even have offered help to his mistress, thus hindering the action.

fulfillment or take offense. The servant must go and—stay. The queen must cry out, "Bring me an axe." No other words of hers would equally suit for her first utterance after the information, "The dead are slaying the living"—a paradox she immediately comprehends. In other words, as we see from this passage and the one like it in the *Persians*, there were occasionally exigencies in the early drama where nothing else could so well meet the need of a situation as the assignment of the so-called false (but inner) motive; and Aeschylus should receive no little credit in both cases for his invention of real inner reasons for exit, even at the cost of false motivation.

Summing up, then, our study of these questioned devices<sup>42</sup> for the moving of an actor, both those with a true and the two with a false motivation, we find that Aeschylus has given us in every case but one (the fourth in this study) a real inner reason—one which naturally grows out of the situation itself. Considering the fact that, in his early work, he was severely handicapped by the paucity of his actors, and by the lack of a convenient background for entrances and exits, he was in an unusual degree successful in discovering a happy meeting place for outer and inner motive. Accordingly, the opposite side of the picture reveals in every case (1) a consciousness on the part of the poet of the difficulty confronted; (2) an endeavor to artistically meet it.

Before closing this chapter it may be well, in this connection, to discuss the devices in the earlier plays for choral movements into the orchestra; as it seems desirable to handle them here, rather than in the chapter on the chorus, to which they

<sup>42</sup>It has, of course, been noticed that these questioned devices occur, with but one minor exception, in the earlier plays. Aeschylus' problems were greatly simplified when he was given (or himself devised) a background (palace or temple) suitable for unmotivated entrances and exits.

may seem more properly to belong. In three earlier plays and, I believe, in a later one, Aeschylus found his chorus, when it was time for them to sing, outside the orchestra. As convention demanded their presence there during a stasimon,<sup>43</sup> he was compelled to make either a motivated or unmotivated change of position. He preferred the former method, as the three passages discussed first will show.

*Eighth Device—to get Chorus into Orchestra* (Suppliants, 506 ff.—especially 508).—Danaus has already been sent from the stage by the king. The king himself is soon to leave to convene the assembly. The chorus are still on the altar or mound, where they must have joined their father at about 210. It is time for the stasimon to be rendered; the poet must, therefore, bring the chorus into the orchestra. But such a movement on the part of the chorus Aeschylus felt defied all probability. What was more unlikely than that they should leave their place of refuge,—with their pursuers expected any minute and male protectors denied them? How was Aeschylus to meet this situation? Of course, the chorus could come down of their own accord after the king's departure during some anapests, and without the assignment of any motive whatever; or, the king could request them to leave the altar with promise of protection. This latter course Aeschylus adopted, and Richter is severe in his criticism.<sup>44</sup> He charges that this motive arises from an outer and not an inner necessity of the drama.<sup>45</sup> That the outer necessity was stronger than the inner may be true, but there are two inter-

<sup>43</sup>There is only one probable violation of this convention in all the plays, viz., in the *Eumenides*, where, I think, the chorus sang in Apollo's temple. I shall discuss the arguments pro and con on another page of this study.

<sup>44</sup>Richter, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>45</sup>So Tucker, who remarks in his note: "This move is obviously unnecessary for the plot, and but a transparent device for getting the chorus into position for the next stasimon."

esting points to be observed: one is, the fact that there *was* an inner necessity. The father of these girls has left them. They are in abject terror on the mound clinging to the altars—in a truly pitiable state of mind. They certainly need consolation, if any can be forthcoming, and this is what the king offers—assuring them—calming them—telling them that there is no cause for their remaining with such tention on the mound. The other interesting point is this: the motive which Aeschylus used to conceal his outer necessity was an inner one, as these words of comfort and suggestion fall quite naturally from the lips of the sympathetic king. Richter, on the other hand, calls this a poor motive—and worse than none. But surely some motive was needed, for this leaving their place of refuge was so unlikely that had they done so without word of command,—and that too from a king who could give protection,—they would have violated probability to an offending degree. Aeschylus chose this motive—an inner one, as I have shown—because there was no better one: and it doubtless appeared better than none at all.<sup>46</sup> We know why Aeschylus wanted the descent of the chorus; just why Pelagus (the poet's mouthpiece) wished it, is of course not expressly stated. But he was a king—it was his wish, and that was something; then, too, he reassured them and pledged his protection. It therefore was

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<sup>46</sup>Had Aeschylus allowed the chorus to step down with no motive assigned, the Suppliants at this juncture would be no drama at all. The dramatic illusion that they are real rational actors in life's drama would be largely lost, and they would be little more than the old Dionysic chorus. But as Aeschylus has passed the play to us, there is illusion that properly belongs to drama. They went down, not to a dancing place (baldly stated), but to an ἄλσος which still afforded the protection of the gods.

<sup>47</sup>Wecklein's observation in his note, "Die szenische Notwendigkeit wird durch das Zögern des Chors verdeckt," is hardly true. The hesitation of the Danaids only calls attention to the unlikelihood of any

with no little success that Aeschylus used Pelasgus in this passage as an inner veil to cover his external necessity.<sup>47</sup>

*Ninth Device—to get Chorus into Orchestra* (Septem, 265).—We have a like device in the Septem where Eteocles incidentally requests the chorus to leave the images and go into the orchestra, ἐκτὸς οὔσ' ἀγαλμάτων. Here, of course, there is no improbability about the girls leaving the sanctuary, whenever their fears are somewhat quieted, and so less necessity for the request, *i. e.*, the device. Still the courage of these girls needs bolstering up, else their weak cries may dispirit the soldiery (cf. 237). So Eteocles asks them to leave their position of craven fear on the mound (similar in its arrangement of altars and statues to the one in the Suppliants) and "raise a sacrificial shout" that shall inspirit the army and take away terror of the foe. As in the Suppliants, the poet speaks through the mouth of the king; again it is a king's wish which causes the removal. For mere conventional movement, therefore, Aeschylus seems to have had an aversion; so we see him here, with hardly less success, feeling after the inner and the artistic.

*Tenth Device—to get Chorus into Orchestra* (Prometheus, 273-278).—Words of similar intent are spoken by Prometheus to bring the chorus down the cliff from their aerial car into the orchestra. Bolle<sup>48</sup> suggests that Prometheus makes this request of them, because he is bound so tightly that he can only painfully turn his head toward them, as long as they are in the car, or on the second cliff (which is one of the two cliffs he imagines as forming the background). This might be very such move. In portraying this hesitation Aeschylus frankly admits the difficulty of his position—he meets it squarely—he paints their timidity—which, then, he overbears by the king's promised protection. In this hesitation, however, there is probably no attempt to "conceal a scenic necessity."

<sup>48</sup>See his *Die Bühne des Aeschylus*, p. 6.



reasonable were it not for the fact that Prometheus and the chorus have already carried on the greater part of their dialogue. From this point on the chorus are thrown into the background, and Oceanus, Io and Hermes are the principal interlocutors. Had this suggestion from Prometheus come shortly after the entrance of the chorus, Bolle's theory would carry much weight. Placed, as the passage is, at the close of their long conversation of almost 150 verses, it seems altogether better to consider it a device similar to those already discussed in the Suppliants and Septem, viz., to bring the chorus into the orchestra.<sup>49</sup> It is true, the scene between Oceanus and Prometheus intervenes before the singing of the stasimon—and well for Aeschylus that it does. In the words of the device Prometheus would have the chorus listen to and sympathize with the whole story of his wrongs (this is Aeschylus' inner reason for their movement), but he could hardly have asked this and immediately been treated to a choral song. As it is, the already mentioned scene intervenes and, by the time of its conclusion, the Oceanides could sing their stasimon, before the prospective conversation, without giving offense to any spectator who may vaguely have remembered the reason for their change of position. Lest, however, some one should take offense because of the Titan's promise so long deferred, Aeschylus makes him apologize for his silence (436-437). But he assigns not the external reason, viz., that he might give his chorus time to sing, but an inner reason—altogether plausible:

μή τοι γλιδῇ δοκεῖτε μηδ' ἀνθαδίᾳ  
 σιγᾶν με· συννοίᾳ δὲ δάπτομαι κέαρ,  
 ὁρῶν ἑμαυτὸν ὧδε προουσελούμενον.

<sup>49</sup>The scholiast says: "βούλεται γὰρ στήσαι τὸν χορὸν ὅπως τὸ στάσιμον ᾄσῃ." Harry's note is: "To listen to the narrative and be prepared to sing the στάσιμον." Wecklein's note is: "So as to listen more conveniently to a long narration. A motive is thus provided for the descent of the chorus from their car into the orchestra."

We must not forget, too, that it is in the presence of the chorus that Prometheus has already told Oceanus of wrongs done by Zeus both to himself and his brother, Typhon. Here again we see the tragedian struggling for the inner reason, which he seems even compelled to back up with a later apology,<sup>50</sup> and in this maturer play his efforts (though upon examination somewhat clumsy) are crowned with a good measure of success.

*Eleventh Device—to get Chorus into Orchestra* (Eumenides, 307-309).—This fourth choral movement is much easier for the poet to manage than the other three, as there were only a few steps to be taken—and those were probably on a level. In the Suppliants and Septem the choreutae had to descend from an altar—a move altogether more noticeable. In the Prometheus the movement was one of some little distance, beside involving a descent. We shall expect, therefore, an easier handling of the chorus in this last extant drama, and this is what we find.

This movement is effected in a natural way by the anapestic exhortation, ἄγε δὴ καὶ χορὸν ἄψωμεν, *z. t. l.*, "Let us now add the (choral) dance, *i. e.*, movement (to our binding spell) as we sing."<sup>51</sup> Of course the dance regularly accompanied song, so this slight change of position would have been natural with no statement; but Aeschylus seized his opportunity to express this accompaniment here,—thus giving to the few steps<sup>52</sup> an inevitability which completely concealed from the audience the conventional (external) necessity. The chorus were still close enough to Orestes for the working of

<sup>50</sup>This apology of the Titan for his silence is also considered in Chapter III under the heading, Five Speeches which justify a previous silence.

<sup>51</sup>So Verrall's note on this passage.

<sup>52</sup>There would be but a few steps from the front of the stage to the rear of the orchestra.

their spell. As in the other three examples of choral movement, an inner reason called for the move; but here our poet was even more successful than in the *Prometheus* in assigning a natural and inner motive, as no later apology (to back it up) was needed.

Summing up, then, these questioned devices for the moving of the chorus into the orchestra, we find that in the first two Aeschylus had no little success in concealing the conventional necessity to which he was subject. In the *Prometheus* he was quite successful in such concealment—so much so that every first-hand reader, I believe, accepts his inner reason without question; in fact, even one of the critics (Bolle), as we have seen, takes this reason at its full face value, ignoring the external need altogether. Moreover, in the last device of this character (in the *Eumenides*) Aeschylus was about as successful as one could wish in finding his inner reason.



## THE CHORUS.

## ITS COMPOSITION.

In only two of Aeschylus' tragedies do we find old men in the chorus. In the other five plays we have young women. Sophocles, on the contrary, chose men for the chorus in five of his plays, while young women appeared only in two. Euripides, like Aeschylus, judging each poet of course from the extant plays, seems to have preferred a female chorus.

The reasons which led Aeschylus to choose the age and sex he did for his choreutae are perfectly obvious. In the *Suppliants* we find a myth had appealed to him which dealt with fifty maids. The only way he could approximately bring on that number was to make of them his chorus. The fact is, he probably chose this myth because it exactly suited conditions of the drama in the early period of his career. In this story the *Daniads* were the principals. In the primitive drama, as he found it, the chorus was the virtual protagonist, with a short messenger account, speech or dialogue between each stasimon to advance the action. There could therefore be but one chorus for a play dealing with the Danaus sage—the heroines of the story themselves.

In the *Persians* and the *Agamemnon*, under somewhat analogous conditions old men were chosen for the chorus—and for patent reasons. In each case the king and army of the country were off fighting; the elders had been left behind—too old to fight, but ripe in counsels; and in the case of the *Persians*, at any rate, they were regents of the realm. Aside from the queers in each drama, they were the ones nearest the royal heart, full of anxiety for the absent and eager for a triumphal

return. Who, then, could so naturally or so well serve as the poet's agent in the lyrical parts of these plays for unfolding events of the past, and for gathering a cloud of dread uncertainty which must precipitate ruin? Another advantage in a male chorus must not be overlooked. The fact that they—being men—are so stricken with fear at first, and with grief later, when the catastrophe is unfolded, produces an effect of utter collapse far beyond the power of a chorus of women.<sup>53</sup>

In the *Septem*, aside from the fact that had a chorus of men been chosen there would have been an absolute dearth of female characters during the first three-fourths of the play, there was yet a more vital reason for Aeschylus' choice. He evidently wished to arouse patriotic sentiments in his audience, and to paint the drama of war. Because of the paucity of his actors and his limited stage machinery, anything like a realistic war scene was out of the question. What, then, could he do? He must describe to the audience the scene he could not act before them. Right here we find Aeschylus' reason for his choice of young women in the chorus of the *Septem*. They, better than men, can describe this scene—in this case no epic description will suffice. They come to the citadel disordered (this time there is no stately anapestic entrance march). With poignant fear they rush to the altars for protection from the foe; now they visualize<sup>54</sup> for the audience the onslaught of the enemy;

<sup>53</sup>So Teuffel in his introduction (p. 5). Herein our poet shows a much greater power of discrimination than Phrynichus, who chose a female chorus for the *Phoenissae*, his play on which this Aeschylean drama is modeled. Were the *Phoenissae* entirely extant, a comparison of the effects of the two choruses would afford a very interesting contrast.

<sup>54</sup>In his efforts (with marked success) to visualize this war scene, Aeschylus is unconsciously perhaps preparing his hand for that incomparable passage of visualization—the Cassandra scene in the *Agamemnon*. There all the horror of murder is present, although murder's presence is absent.

now they pathetically paint the awful horrors of war. How more vividly than by actual war itself, could Aeschylus have presented a beleaguered city? It should be added that a more complete picture of war is given by the introduction of a female chorus. War's reverse side is shown. What a terrible fate awaits these maidens if the town is captured! Again when the tragic catastrophe sets in, as Flagg observes, the appropriateness of the poet's choice is apparent from still another point of view. I will quote from this editor:<sup>55</sup> "The sentiments expressed (by the chorus) in opposition to Eteocles (when they are trying to dissuade him from meeting his brother) are such that, though the noblest in tragedy, they could not have been uttered by men." It is true, a chorus of men might have deprecated the pollution of fratricide, but Eteocles' point of honor in 683-684, εἴπερ κακὸν φέροι τις, αἰσχύνῃς ἄτερ ἔστω· μόνον γὰρ κέρδος ἐν τεθνηκόσι, they could hardly have combated.

In the *Prometheus Bound* the chorus of ocean nymphs is chosen as a foil for Prometheus.<sup>56</sup> By very contrast with them the strength and defiance of the hero is emphasized. The fiery Titan would have spurned advice and sympathy from a chorus of men, as disdainfully as the proffered overtures of Oceanus. Advice—help—were not things that Prometheus craved, but feminine sympathy (cf. 276-277).

In the *Choephoroi* a chorus of handmaids from the palace was chosen because they alone, knowing conditions in the palace and torn by them just as Electra, could feel that hate for master and mistress, that longing for an avenger, which a chorus must

<sup>55</sup>P. 96 of the notes.

<sup>56</sup>While the chorus is usually of the same sex and near the same age as the protagonist—obviously to the end that they may afford a closer sympathy or a more united co-operation—sometimes for very opposite considerations a chorus of different sex and age is chosen. In the *Antigone*, e. g., the lone position of the heroine is emphasized by the introduction of a chorus of old men.

feel in a drama of revenge. Their own emotion at the breaking point—they could communicate their feeling to the spectators of the play.

In the *Eumenides*, Aeschylus chose a chorus that differs from all others of extant tragedy. In the last play of his trilogy, the poet's purpose was to free Orestes from further persecution and lift the cloud of the curse from his race. When the play began to shape itself, he doubtless had Athene, Apollo and Orestes in his mind for the trial scene, as well as the prosecuting Erinyes. Athene, Apollo and Orestes made the three actors; therefore the group of personages,<sup>57</sup> the goddesses of revenge, must be his chorus.

#### MOTIVATION OF ENTRANCES.

A question of interest here presents itself, viz., did Aeschylus bring on a motived or unmotived chorus? That is, did he give the audience any particular reason, by direct statement or inference, for the presence of the chorus where they are found near the beginning of each play? In the *Suppliants* it was an unavoidable inference for the spectator, that the chorus came into the *ἄλσος* (orchestra), because it contained the altar with its statues; which was just such a place of refuge as they were seeking.

In the *Persians*, if we assume, as is probable,<sup>58</sup> that there was no change of scene and that the tomb was the only structure visible during the play, the chorus entered unmotived so far as place was concerned. Just why the old councillors should go to the tomb of Darius, and why Atossa should ex-

<sup>57</sup>In Homer and Hesiod the Erinyes are usually plural in number; no definite number, however, is given by either poet, nor are names assigned.

<sup>58</sup>See Dignan, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17; also Richter, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-105.

pect to meet them there rather than at the palace or council house, Aeschylus nowhere states.<sup>59</sup>

In the Septem the chorus of young<sup>60</sup> women tell us, what

<sup>59</sup>In Sophocles' *Electra* we have a choral entrance offering an interesting parallel. Entering the court yard, *Electra*, in a lyric monody, has just given expression to the sadness of her life in the palace within, when she is joined by the chorus, whom she addresses (129-130): "Ah, noble hearted women, ye have come to soothe my woes." In so far, their coming is motivated, but what reason did the chorus have for expecting to find *Electra* in the court yard? They surely did not expect to enter the palace and comfort her within, yet they did not know of *Aegisthus*' absence (cf. 310), a circumstance which alone made her egress possible. *Electra* herself says she is outside by merest chance (cf. 312-313), i. e., because of his absence; and *Clytemnestra* (516 ff.) says: "At large once more it seems thou rangest, for *Aegisthus* is not here, who has always kept thee at least from passing the gates and shaming thy friends." This meeting at the gates Sophocles left one of chance. The small probability of the chorus seeing *Electra* in the court yard may never have occurred to the poet, and it is perhaps making too great a demand on the early dramatist to hold him to such scrutiny of detail. Kaibel, in his edition (p. 89), has the following note: "Aber Soph. hat nicht daran gedacht, das Erscheinen der Frauen damit zu motiviren, vielmehr wissen sie von Aegisths Abwesenheit gar nichts (310). Ihr kommen ist durch nichts motivirt als dadurch, dass ein Chor nothwendig ist."

<sup>60</sup>Tucker, in his edition, under τὰ τοῦ Δράματος Πρόσωπα, and also in his note on 686, which involves the use of the word τέκνον, tries to show that some of the women were not young, but fully mature; but one might as well call them children on the strength of the word παῖδες in 792. His evidence from Cod. Guelf. and the scholium on 107, only shows that τέκνον was a stumbling block to some of the ancient readers of the *Septem* as well as himself. The sentiments expressed by the chorus are not too mature for young women, nor are their references to the sexual relation unusual (cf. *Suppliants* 301, a verse which Tucker however assigns to the king; also *Agamemnon*, 1125-1126 and 1193). Furthermore, the word τέκνον need not be a crux. These young women were probably well acquainted with their prince. Now that he is madly plunging to destruction, they cry, "What madness, child!"—an expression quite natural. It is better to follow the evidence in the text (110 and 171) and the statement in the Hypothesis of the best Ms.

indeed their manner of entrance indicated, that they have come to the Acropolis (cf. 240) in fear—to the images of the gods; seeking protection (cf. 212) from the enemy.

In the Prometheus the chorus, nymphs of Oceanus, tell the Titan on their arrival that they have come out of curiosity, — in their haste even bare-foot, for echo from the clang of bolts had penetrated even their “caves of the sea.”

In the Agamemnon different views are held, but the chorus probably came on without express motivation, as neither the chorus nor Clytemnestra speak of any summons issued by the queen.<sup>61</sup> The Hypothesis, however, says: καὶ ὁ μὲν (sc. σοκρός) ἰδὼν ἀπήγγειλεν, αὐτὴ δὲ τῶν πρεσβυτῶν ὄχλον μεταπέμπεται περὶ τοῦ πυρσοῦ ἐροῦσα· ἐξ ὧν καὶ ὁ χορὸς συνίσταται. Accordingly several editors have assumed that between the exit of the watchman and the entrance of the chorus several hours intervene, to allow Clytemnestra time to inform the elders by perhaps offering sacrifice on all the altars.<sup>62</sup> As Richter says, at the end of an act or at a change of scene (as in the Eumenides), a lapse of time may be readily allowed; otherwise, a short scene should intervene to give time; but

<sup>61</sup>Surely had Clytemnestra summoned the elders, they would have mentioned the fact when they addressed her:

σὺ δέ, Τυνδάρεω  
θύγατερ, βασίλεια, Κλυταιμῆστρα,  
τί χρέος; τί νέον; κ. τ. λ. (83-103).

Moreover, they would have been especially likely to assign their reason for coming, since she disdained them. I agree with the editors who think the queen was directly addressed. To see the likelihood of this point, compare a like passage in the Iphigeneia of Tauris, where the chorus enter and address their priestess as follows:

τί νέον; τίνα φροντίδ' ἔχεις;  
τί με πρὸς νάους ἄγαγες . . . ; (137-138).

<sup>62</sup>For a fuller account of the different views of editors see Richter, *op. cit.*, 134-136.



there must be something of the sort. Had the poet really wished to motive the choral entrance in this way, he would surely have made some mention of the kindling of altar fires, as a signal for assembly, in the speech of the watchman. Richter has pointed out that the real reason why an interval of time has been assumed is to motive the entrance of the chorus; he denies, however, that the poet felt obliged to motive every choral parodos. This critic's judgment seems sane, and I translate: "The chorus in Attic tragedy was a body taken for granted—so essential that it needed no motivation on its entrance."<sup>63</sup> He adds that he who insists on a motive may find it in the situation itself. It is quite natural for the elders to assemble at the palace, where at any time the news may come of Troy's capture. On assembling they tell of the expedition from its very inception, which proves that they could have had no news of its victorious outcome; else, surely, their first utterance had been one of exultation. They cling, however, to the hope that Troy will fall.

In the *Choephoroi* the chorus state in their first two verses that they have been sent from the palace with libations,—of course for the tomb on which Orestes has just placed his offering, the lock of hair.

In the *Eumenides* the chorus on awakening from sleep sing their first parodos in the temple of Apollo.<sup>64</sup> Aeschylus is no longer in every case bound by the convention that his

<sup>63</sup>Op. cit., p. 135.

<sup>64</sup>After verse 63 the whole dreadful tableau in the temple must have been visible to the audience. The effectiveness of the early part of the *Eumenides* absolutely depends on such a presentation. The audience must see Orestes clinging to the ὄμφαλος and surrounded by the Furies. We do not know just how the poet accomplished this scene shift. There have been several devices proposed: (1) the ordinary ἐκκύβλημα, or platform on wheels; (2) the same, understood as a semicircular revolving platform, the view of C. Exon, *Hermathena*, Vol. XI, No. 26, p. 132; (3) a curtain,—a view for which we have

chorus must sing in the orchestra.<sup>65</sup> At least, on this one occasion his genius would not brook limitation, and consequently we owe to him a novel and most powerful scene. Had the chorus come out of the temple into the orchestra before singing their ode, this parodos would have lost its very entity, for it is a waking lament, in which they give expression to the troubled dream that has disturbed their slumber. Moreover, the arraignment of Apollo, beginning "Child of Zeus, thou art a thief" (149), gains half its force because it is uttered in Apollo's own temple. Furthermore, Apollo's fine lines (179-197) simply could not have been spoken had the chorus been outside his temple.<sup>66</sup> After line 234 the scene changes<sup>67</sup> to the temple of Athena at Athens. Orestes enters

no evidence, propounded by Müller. Sidgwick and Wecklein agree that by some means the interior of the temple was visible. For an opposite view see Richter (op. cit., p. 220) and Verrall's note in his edition. To me, the way in which Verrall brings on and takes off the actors in this part of the play seems most commonplace, and spoils its effectiveness.

<sup>65</sup>I am, of course, aware that the chorus in both the Suppliants and Septem sang their parodos on an altar. The point is, the altars in both those cases were probably in the orchestra; here the chorus sing their parodos altogether away from the orchestra in the temple—thus breaking convention. Holding this view, I must dissent from Blass, who says in his note on the first parodos (140-178): "Man hat sich zu denken, dass die Eringen, eine nach der andern errachend, aufsprachend, sich umsehen, hier und her rannten, schliesslich aber nach vorne zu, d. h. von dem Ekkyklem herunter in die Orchestra, wo es möglich war sich zu gruppieren und regelmässige Bewegungen auszuführen." He adds, however, later: "Nach der Fiction des Dichters (179) sind sie gleichwohl immer noch innerhalb des Tempels."

<sup>66</sup>Verrall (as Richter already noted) holds that the chorus sang in the orchestra. His translations of δωμάτων (179) and of μυχῶν (180) by "sanctuary" beg the question, and need no refutation.

<sup>67</sup>The only well established scene change in Aeschylus. On this all the editors agree. Individual editors, however, have proposed other changes. Wilamovitz (in *Hermes* XXXII, 1897, pp. 382-398) argues for a change of scene in the Persians. For an answer which seems to



the stage over the orchestra,<sup>68</sup> and at verse 243 sinks down (cf. 252) clasping the base of the goddess' statue. With 244 the chorus enter hunting the trail and begin the second parodos, which lacks the usual strophe and antistrophe. Hereupon we have a "search scene";<sup>69</sup> the chorus search over the entire scene for their victim (cf. 255 ff.). In 252 they discover him and, as they pronounce upon him the inexorable doom of a matricide, the parodos closes.

The presence of the chorus in both parodoi was motivated. The shade of Clytemnestra, before they sang the first parodos, motivated their presence in the temple—no motive, however, was needed but Orestes. At the end of the Choephoroi he was hounded off the stage by the spiritual presence of the furies; so the spectator was ready for their physical presence in the play that succeeded. In the second parodos, as already stated, the chorus entered, in word and in manner, scenting their blood-dripping victim. Orestes, of course, again was the motive for their presence.

The conclusion in regard to choral motivation is that while Aeschylus motivated five of his choral entrances, he did not feel obliged to do so. The chorus was the essential element of the early drama, and "Bring on your chorus" was the regular introduction of a Greek play.<sup>70</sup>

me complete, see Dignan, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17. Tucker in his edition of the Septem indicates a scene change (at 78) from the Agora to the Acropolis. Since he cites no proof to fortify his position, we may pass this statement by—merely remarking that in time of war the Acropolis of a beleaguered city might well serve for the Agora as well. In his edition of the Choephoroi in the Introduction, p. XL, he discusses a probable scene change at 874. Consult Verrall's edition, Appendix I, pp. 183-188, for a second scene change, which he assumes in that play.

<sup>68</sup>See Capps, *The Greek Stage*, T. A. P. A., Vol. XXII, pp. 32-34.

<sup>69</sup>See Capps, *loc. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>70</sup>I have noted elsewhere how, in like manner, the poet (for scenic considerations) sometimes brought on actors with naive freedom in his earlier plays; *i. e.*, he did not feel constrained to make clear just why the actor should be at the given place at the given time.

## FOUR EXAMPLES OF ARTISTIC MANAGEMENT.

I desire to discuss three passages where Aeschylus artistically handled a chorus whose presence was perplexing; and also a fourth where, though the chorus was not in his way, he has handled it with consummate art.

In composing the *Agamemnon* (855 ff.) Aeschylus perhaps at first felt hampered by his chorus, until the insertion of verses 855-858 occurred to him as a happy solution for the situation. Clytemnestra steps out to meet her lord soon after his arrival, with these words:

ἄνδρες πολῖται, πρέσβος Ἀργείων τόδε,  
οὐκ αἰσχυνοῦμαι τοὺς φιλόνορας τρόπους  
λέξαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐν χρόνῳ δ' ἀποφθίνει  
τὸ τάρβος ἀνθρώποισιν (855-858).

The scene thus introduced must, of course, take place before the audience and therefore before the chorus; so Aeschylus in these words acknowledged and rendered very tolerable his stage-limitation—the presence of the chorus, who made the action public. His embarrassment arising from the presence of the chorus here lay, I think, not so much in the fact (*per se*) that the chorus were to be present and thereby make public a family scene—the reunion between husband and wife after a long separation—for, without thought of embarrassment, he allowed his chorus in the *Choephoroi* to be present during the touching reunion between brother and sister; besides, I hardly think Aeschylus was more sensitive on this point than Sophocles, who portrayed before his chorus the tender reunion of brother and sister in the *Electra*, and the still more tender parting between father and daughters in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*. His embarrassment lay rather in the fact

that he must make Clytemnestra speak words of greeting known by these elders to be false. He had too keen a sense of dramatic propriety to be willing to consider the chorus, as did Euripides on occasion, a conventional body on whose presence he need hardly reckon. Aeschylus faced the difficulty here squarely—just as it was—and with ingenuity. He portrayed the queen with such tragic strength, with such boldness and brazenness, that his actress herself met the situation for him. Another woman would have said “I hesitate”; Clytemnestra by the tone of her voice, it seems to me, made οὐκ αἰσχυνοῦμαι mean almost “I glory.” “I am not ashamed to speak of my love of my husband before you men; in time fear for men vanishes.” This excuse of the queen tolerating the presence of the chorus is natural (for her) and satisfactory. Undramatically stated, it is just this: “Despite what these men suspect, I do not mind their presence in the least—let them stay.” The passage doubtless also contains the terrible undercurrent, “My fear for Agamemnon is waning”; but here is a good instance of one of the double meanings in which the poet took so keen a relish. It none the less, I think, admirably served to naturalize his stage limitation—the presence of the chorus.

Verses 872-874.

ἀποσταθῶμεν πράγματος τελουμένου,  
ὅπως δοκῶμεν τῶνδ' ἀναίτιαι κακῶν  
εἶναι· μάχης γὰρ δὴ κεκύρωται τέλος

in the Choephoroi are also interesting as showing what command Aeschylus had over his chorus. These verses have received little consideration;<sup>71</sup> and yet few passages in his dra-

<sup>71</sup>Richter in his criticism and Wecklein in his edition do not touch on these verses from an artistic point of view. Verrall and Tucker, however, in their editions have interesting notes, which I shall presently quote.

mas, when put under the microscope, will reveal so much art. Why do the chorus (872) stand aside? Their stated reason sounds plausible enough: they do not wish to be implicated in the tragedy which is being enacted within. They know not as yet whether Aegisthus or Orestes will get the upper hand, and in the event of Orestes' fall they would avoid suspicions of Aegisthus' wrath. But does not this movement of the chorus fill a larger purpose in the dramatic economy of the play? Or, is not the reason ostensibly given by the chorus but a screen for the real reason of the poet which will presently appear? It seems likely that the chorus divided into two companies and withdrew (by the two entrances to the orchestra) behind the side walls.<sup>72</sup> In that case they were visible to the spectators though unseen by the actors, Orestes and Clytemnestra.<sup>73</sup> It requires but a little imagination to picture the effectiveness of such a disposition of actors and chorus. The members of the chorus, in various attitudes of intensest wonder and terror, listen—half in hope, half in horror. It is a battle for life that Clytemnestra and Orestes are fighting—and here we find the poet's real reason for removal—they must fight it out alone.<sup>74</sup> The poet removes his chorus from sight of these two actors—son and mother—feeling instinctively that the presence of outsiders would be a profanation. The soul of this mother and the soul of this son are bare before each other during these moments of solemn judgment. Aeschylus' real reason for the change of position was just this: the chorus was in his road; he must get rid of it; he therefore sent them (on the pretext of 872-

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<sup>72</sup>See Richter, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

<sup>73</sup>This does not mean that they could not actually see the actors; their position, however, near the end of the walls was such as to carry out the illusion that the participants were alone.

<sup>74</sup>Pylades, a mute save for the speaking of three verses, need hardly be reckoned in this connection.

873) to a position behind the side walls.<sup>75</sup> Here again Aeschylus surmounted his stage-limitation—this time, perhaps, by somewhat defying convention and sending his chorus from the orchestra together. One should add that this view does not preclude a minor advantage which this same movement may have served. Wecklein says that at 891 the body of Aegisthus was visible to the audience through the opened door. This may well have been so, and of course a larger proportion of the audience could have seen with this disposition of the chorus.

There is another passage in the *Agamemnon* (1343-1371) where the chorus are plainly in the poet's way and yet are artistically handled. As has been often remarked, whether from necessity<sup>76</sup> or considerations of taste, murder was not com-

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<sup>75</sup>After writing the above (which is my own independent judgment) I find I have been somewhat anticipated by Verrall, whose note I herewith quote: "This panic among the women, after all their admirable bravery and presence of mind, is an excellent touch: and so in their imagination that they could possibly now dissociate themselves, if need were, from the plot, they are for the moment incapable of thought. From ἀποστάθωμεν we must naturally understand that they fly and quit the scene. For this there is every possible reason, natural and dramatic. During the next scene and at the close of it, their presence would be worse than useless. The attempts made, from supposed theoretic necessity, to evade this ἀποστάθωμεν and keep the maid servants somewhere on the field, have led to some surprising devices. It has even been suggested that they got behind the tomb of Agamemnon." I again quote: "Orestes, Pylades and Clytemnestra are alone upon the scene. This would be best; indeed, I think, the only tolerable manner of presenting such a deed in action. No one is present but the murderess, the avenger, and the visible representative of the divine command." Tucker expresses a different view, in his note on 871. I quote: "This withdrawal (which is to be taken literally) gives an opportunity for the change of scene at 874 (for which see his Introduction, p. XL) and for the new position of the chorus at 934.

<sup>76</sup>See Freytag, *Technique of the Drama*, tr. by McEwan, pp. 75-76.

mitted on the Greek stage.<sup>77</sup> For the full tragic effect on Greek consciousness, however, the cry of the victim was a requisite. But in the *Agamemnon*, when the audience heard the ὄμοι of the king, the chorus heard it also, and that was the poet's perplexity. How was he to keep those elders from breaking into the palace and intercepting things half done? Cassandra must meet the same fate as *Agamemnon*, else the tragedy would be spoiled.<sup>78</sup>

To say that convention prevented the chorus from entering the palace may be true, though we should be slow to assert that Aeschylus is absolutely bound by this or that convention in his later work; but such convention was of little assistance to a great dramatist who keenly felt the force of cause and event. Such an artist knows that even convention must be met in a natural way. Does convention prevent the entrance of the chorus into the palace? Then common sense and ordinary conduct must as well,—else there is an unreality which is absent in a work of art. So we repeat, how is Aeschylus on rational grounds to keep his chorus from the royal house, until the fatal moments pass?

In the murder scene in the *Choephoroi*, already mentioned, he had no like difficulty, for the chorus of women were accomplices in the plot. There he feared no hindrance from them; but here is certainly a case where the chorus embarrassed the poet. Doubtless he was too Greek to wish he had none at all, or to imagine that drama could and would in future years exist without it; but the text he has left us leaves traces of

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<sup>77</sup>Strangely enough the Hypothesis remarks here: ἰδίως δ' Ἀίσχυλος τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα ἐπὶ σκηνῆς ἀναρθεῖσθαι ποιεῖ, which the editors have discredited, as a reading of the text reveals the contrary.

<sup>78</sup>Cassandra must have been murdered after *Agamemnon*. This was the natural order of events, and there was hardly time for her murder between her entrance into the palace at 1331 and *Agamemnon's* cry in 1343. It must have taken place between 1345 and 1371, a much longer interval of time. See the next note.



his dilemma. On the one hand, he must not portray his chorus as cowards betraying their lord; nor can he, on the other, allow them to enter and spoil the action.<sup>79</sup> Accordingly he consumed what time he must in a spirited conversation, participated in by each one of the elders, as to the best course of action; and this certainly is not unnatural in men who have lost their grip on active life,—whose lives, as the poet himself says, have “fallen into the sere.” They are old men—throughout the play represented as loyal but slow of comprehension, a characteristic not unusual in a Greek chorus.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, the majority assert themselves as in favor of immediate action—which means entrance into the palace. The minority, however, offer a hesitating objection, which indicates the slowness of age rather than cowardice, and furnish Aeschylus with the necessary delay.<sup>81</sup> Finally the coryphaeus voices the general sentiment that they enter, and this no doubt they are on the point of doing (they have taken several steps toward the palace) when by some means or other the interior of the palace is revealed. This answers the same purpose as though the chorus themselves had entered.<sup>82</sup>

To say that Aeschylus meets this situation to our absolute satisfaction is perhaps an overstatement; some of us may want immediate action—the doors burst open, if barred—the murderous blows stopped. The statement, however, that he has

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<sup>79</sup>In a scholium (which Weissmann, *Die Scenische Anweisungen*, pp. 9-11, refers to Aristarchus) we have the following discriminating statement: ἐπιτήδεις δὲ τὴν διακοπὴν ἐποίησαν ὁ ποιητῆς δυοῖν στοχαζόμενος, μήτε αἰσχροὺς θέλων τὴν κρίσιν τῶν ὑπηκόων προεμένων τὸν βασιλέα μήτε ἐπιζίνδυνον τὴν πράξιν προπετῶς εἰσιόντων τὰ βασίλεια.

<sup>80</sup>There is a like hesitation displayed in the Septem. See Flaggs's *Seven against Thebes*, note on v. 806.

<sup>81</sup>This is a proof of the wisdom of the poet in choosing the personnel of his chorus (in addition to the other proofs set forth in an early part of this chapter).

<sup>82</sup>See note on verse 1370 in Wecklein's *Agamemnon*.

managed it with much skill and as well as any dramatist could manage it, under the embarrassment of a chorus, seems unquestionably true. So in this third instance, Aeschylus surmounted his stage limitation,—this time by inventing a situation which all but completely naturalizes what, in the hands of a lesser playwright, would have been a very embarrassing inactivity on the part of his chorus.

To show how easily Aeschylus might have bungled with his chorus here, I desire to cite three passages from Euripides in which the latter poet under similar circumstances has given us choruses unnatural and undramatic to an offending degree.

In the *Medea* the *choreutae* are awkwardly present on the stage while two murders take place behind the scenes, the intended perpetration of which they have already gathered from the murderess herself before she quits the stage. The awkwardness lies in the fact that they do not desire the deaths of the sons of Medea, any more than the elders desired the death of their lord, and would, therefore, naturally intervene to save them. Beginning with verse 1236 Medea tells the chorus that she has decided to slay her children, and goes within. The chorus do not follow to prevent her, but render an ode containing a prayer that she may be turned from her purpose. After outcries from both sons within, the coryphaeus exclaims: "Hearest thou the cry? O, ill-fated woman! Shall I enter the house? It seems right to ward off the murderous blows from the children." The sons cry out: "Yea, by heaven, ward them off—high time it is." In this scene the chorus are assured of what in the *Agamemnon* they can at best only fear. In the *Agamemnon* Aeschylus can well allow his old men to hesitate; they can not be sure of the queen's purpose; besides, they may have feared a conspiracy; but here hesitation and inactivity are alike senseless. After the boys' call for immediate help the chorus render a choral song of fourteen verses about Ino, if the text be sound, who, too, stifled

her mother love and killed her child. Such sure knowledge, coupled with inactivity, makes the chorus in this play unnatural to the point of our absolute disapprobation.

In the *Hippolytus* we have a suicide behind the scenes which the chorus would naturally try to prevent. In verse 723 Phaedra acquaints the choreutae with her determination to slay herself, and goes within. The chorus then chant an ode, without making one effort to thwart her intention, although throughout they are friendly to Phaedra. Soon a female servant appears with the words: "Alas, alas, run to my succor, all that are near the house; my mistress, the wife of Theseus, is hanging. Will not someone bring a sword with which we may undo the knot around her neck?" Let me in all seriousness ask, how did the chorus know but what Phaedra might live if immediately cut down? And yet one half of it only suggests an entrance to the palace, while the other indulges in a bit of sophistry. Young men-servants finally help in cutting down the corpse. Here again the chorus is not only present on the stage during the murder scene, as in the *Agamemnon*, but their certain knowledge of the whole situation, coupled with the fact that they have no possible conspiracy to face should they decide to step in and interfere, makes their inaction almost unpardonable.

Again in the *Hercules Furens* at 822, on the bidding of Hera, Iris enters with Madness and tells the latter in the presence of the chorus to madden Hercules and make him kill his wife and two children. This Madness goes into the palace to do, and the chorus of men indulge in vain chants for some twenty verses, until a messenger enters with the tidings: "The children are dead." There is possibly an element of dramatic weakness in Aeschylus' management of his chorus of old men in the *Agamemnon*, it is true, but Euripides in like scenes has allowed this element to take seed and grow into a full-grown plant, and this plant on inspection presents a dramatic blemish

of serious proportions. The truth is, Euripides assumes a conventional non-interference on the part of his chorus in such murder scenes, just as much as in others, where he pledges it to secrecy and inactivity at the instance of some actor engaged in conspiracy.

By using these three plays of Euripides for comparison, therefore, we see how easily Aeschylus too might have made mistake in the management of his elders in the *Agamemnon*; and, while every one will readily admit that Euripides, with his intricate plots, had choral problems to face of which Aeschylus little dreamed, the fact remains that Aeschylus, though there were chances for it, never allowed his chorus to be caught in a predicament which involved absurdity.

By the side of these three examples of artistic choral management, I desire to place yet another in the *Eumenides*. Here the chorus is not in the road, as in the other three passages, but it is handled in such an admirable way that it deserves special attention, which so far as I know has never adequately been given it. As is well known, the chorus in the *Eumenides* is unique—Aeschylus has allowed it unusual freedom. These terrible goddesses probably sang their first stasimon in the temple of Apollo and not in the orchestra. They made their appearance in the second parodos, trailing Orestes to his refuge—Athene's statue. No doubt they spoke verses 254-275 from the stage (another unusual performance), rejoicing in the close proximity of their victim. During the anapestic march of 307-320 they doubtless took up their usual position (in the orchestra) for the following stasimon, and from this point on they are more like the conventional chorus. Now this is the interesting point: How did Aeschylus manage this change from the unconventional to the more or less conventional? Would it have seemed natural for the Furies, all at once, to throw off their former role of pursuing goddesses and assume that of the regular chorus? Obviously not. In a case like this,

there must be some natural transition, else a sudden change will present unreality and give offence. Aeschylus makes this change gradual and natural, as we shall see. Just before the stasimon the Erinyes terribly threaten Orestes (in 305) and then utter: ὕμνον δ' ἀκούσει τόνδε δέσμιον σέθεν. They are to sing the necessary choric ode,—but it is to be a hymn, in keeping with their character—a spell to bind the victim, and this illusion is kept up throughout the ode. In 329 the song is τόδε μέλος—but more than that—παρακοπά—παραφορὰ φρενοδαλῆς—ὕμνος ἔξ Ἑρινύων, δέσμιος φρενῶν, ἀφόρμιγτος, αὐτὸνὰ βοοτοῖς. Again in 375: “The lofty glories of men waste away beneath the revengeful measure of our feet.” Furthermore, the words ἄγε δὴ καὶ χορὸν ἄψωμεν (307), introducing the movement into the orchestra, are peculiarly appropriate, as it is at this point that the Furies begin to assume their new role. In this natural and masterful way Aeschylus has accomplished the evolution of his chorus in the Eumenides.<sup>83</sup> By the time for the second stasimon they can sing a regular choral song and without offending artistic taste.

Let us sum up our consideration of the tragedian's management of his chorus. When, on examination of these four examples of artistic choral management, we find this refusal of his genius to be hampered by his chorus in three of them, discovering how he rose above difficulty by naturalizing convention in the first and third instances and by somewhat discarding it in the second; and when we pause over the faultless art with which he has mastered the evolution of his chorus in the Eumenides, we feel that all honor is due this early master-workman, who, at a time when dramatic action and characterization were growing apace, never allowed his chorus

<sup>83</sup> Some of the points mentioned in connection with this evolution will be found in Verrall's edition, note on 307. For a further discussion of the use of verse 307, turn to Chapter I in this study, under the heading Eleventh Device.

to be crowded into a position seriously equivocal, embarrassing or inartistic.

#### EMPLOYMENT FOR INTRODUCTIONS AND TWO POSSIBLE INNOVATIONS.

I now propose briefly to discuss Aeschylus' introductions with a view to his dramatic art and possible innovations. In the earliest two extant plays, the *Suppliants* and *Persians*, the chorus enter at the beginning and give the necessary introductory information and atmosphere. In the others the poet has adopted an introduction in general more dramatic, using the speech of an actor, as in the *Agamemnon*, or the speeches of two actors, as in the *Septem* and *Prometheus*.

Now let us consider two possible innovations of Aeschylus. So far as we know from extant plays, it was he who first invented dramatic illusion in his introductions, thus relieving them of their primitive and direct address.<sup>84</sup> The early dithyrambs, like our choir songs, no doubt were sung *to* the audience; in his *Suppliants*, as we shall see, our poet took a long step toward artistic drama when he made his chorus ignore the audience. This is, I think, the first important innovation (the evidence for which I shall give later) perhaps attributable to Aeschylus. This dramatic illusion, as we shall see, he produced (except in the *Persians*) whether the chorus gave the introductory matter, or one or two actors. The fact is, the assignment of the introductory matter to an actor—prologus—instead of to the chorus (and later to two actors), may well have been a second innovation of the same poet, as his

<sup>84</sup>Of course, I am aware that direct address does not invariably preclude dramatic illusion. In the *Septem* Eteocles may have directly addressed the audience, but under the illusion that they were Cadmean citizens.



Septem is the first extant play which employs this prologus.<sup>85</sup> This innovation also marked a distinct advance in dramatic art, for soliloquy (in the case of one actor) and dialogue (in the case of two) easily relieved any necessity for or tendency toward direct address, and produced the desired illusion. In fact the early poet who realized the advantage of illusion in drama, would almost inevitably have been driven in his introductions to the prologus, and later (on the addition of the second actor<sup>86</sup>) to the introductory dialogue.

With reference to these two innovations, let us examine in some detail all of the introductions. So far as I know, editors and critics have taken for granted that the poet in his first two extant dramas employed primitive and direct address in giving the audience the requisite introductory information. This is undeniably true of the *Persians*, but I believe, untrue of the *Suppliants*. I here wish to suggest a new manner of presentation for the *parodos* of the *Suppliants*. In the *Suppliants*, following the earlier custom, he brought on his chorus at the play's inception; but instead of allowing them to frankly address the audience, he caused them, it seems to me, to disregard it altogether. The playgoer was now a spectator whose position was unacknowledged. The plot was still unfolded by the chorus, but in an indirect way—through addresses to each other and prayers to the gods. Post<sup>87</sup> says: "He (the poet) frankly admits that he is making clear the matters which it is necessary for the audience to know." The

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<sup>85</sup>Themistius refers to Thespis as the inventor of the prologue (and rhesis), citing Aristotle as his authority. But in his *Poetics*, IV, 11-14, Aristotle makes no mention of Thespis, and presents a view of the origin and development of tragedy which hardly harmonizes with Themistius' statement. It can, therefore, scarcely be regarded as conclusive.

<sup>86</sup>This addition of the second actor is, of course, the well established innovation of Aeschylus. See the *Poetics*, IV, 13.

<sup>87</sup>Loc. cit., p. 29.

chorus "frankly address the audience with the tale of their sufferings." It seems to me, however, that Aeschylus consciously shunned such a frank introduction, even as early as his writing of the Suppliants; and that in such avoidance he was quite successful.

The first word in the parodos is "Zeus." "May Zeus, who watches over suppliants, look kindly upon our band which has set sail from the mouth of the Nile." This is probably spoken by the coryphaeus as she, coming up with her sisters, catches sight of the sacred precinct with its many statues and symbols of the gods. A re-reading of the passage reveals, sprinkled all through it, prayers to these gods (and to Io and Ephaphus) for deliverance and safe retreat—and may not even the long descriptions of their flight, *e. g.*, verses 4-23, be justified artistically, *i. e.*, naturally called out by the close proximity of the statues of these very gods to whom they are praying? This does not mean that every word would be spoken just as it is had not the audience been present, for a dramatic poet, if need presses, takes advantage of an opportunity like this and, with the license which the occasion offers, gives as extended an exposition as his audience requires. What more natural for the coryphaeus (on seeing Zeus' welcome statue) than for her, with a gesture toward it, to turn, not to the audience, but to her sisters as she speaks the first twenty-three verses? Verses 4 ff. would, then, be a justification (to her sisters) of her prayers for Zeus' protection: "For we flee for no sin of ours but detesting marriage with Egyptus' sons, and our father has been the adviser and leader of our flight." In verses 23-40 we have a direct appeal to all the gods—to the city, its land and waters. From 40 to 175 we have strophes, antistrophes and refrains. The boldest exposition is in the first strophe and antistrophe, and may well be justified by the nearness of the gods who have just been invoked in the preceding lines: "And invoking Ephaphus, and in this country

where our ancestress once lived, recalling to mind the old sufferings of our race, we shall prove to the inhabitants the validity of our claim on this land's protection." The second strophe and antistrophe and the third strophe were in some way spoken by the chorus to each other—they may have faced each other in two divisions.<sup>88</sup> In the third antistrophe we have a direct appeal to the θεοὶ γενέται. Antistrophe ε contains a prayer that the Zeus who has just been extolled may punish the insolence of their cousins. The refrains added to both strophe ζ and antistrophe ζ relieve them of any charge of direct address to the audience. Strophe η and antistrophe η with their refrain contain a beautiful appeal to Zeus and Artemis. Strophe θ is simply a continuation of the foregoing thought and runs: "But if Zeus does not heed, we will end our existence and approach the Zeus of the dead." The refrain is addressed directly to Zeus. In the antistrophe the thought is carried further: "Zeus, if he does not listen, will be subject to reproach and injustice" (this, half to themselves, half to Zeus). Then again the refrain is directed to Zeus, Io's Zeus.

Of course, it is much more difficult for a poet to employ illusion and indirectly introduce his play with a chorus than with a single actor or two actors—a single actor can soliloquize, two actors can engage in dialogue—and the choral ode under discussion, as a finished product, may not altogether hide the difficulty. But, it seems to me, this beautiful parodos would be much more effective if acted<sup>89</sup> in the foregoing way than with direct address to the audience.

In the Persians the chorus frankly address the audience without any pretense of illusion, introducing themselves—their position in the state—the fears they entertain for the host so long absent. Now, it may be asked, why did Aeschylus,

<sup>88</sup>Verse 58 would certainly be more artistic if spoken to the "stage."

<sup>89</sup>I use the term "acted," for we must not forget that the chorus are the principal actors in this play.

after shunning direct exposition in the *Suppliants*, use it in his next extant drama, the *Persians*? This question, perhaps, may be best answered by another question. Was a more artistic introduction possible for the *Persians*? The only alternative (provided the poet uses a choral opening) would be to make the chorus address themselves either to each other (a course improbable because of the length of the *parodos*) or else to the gods—let us say, first, their Persian gods. Such prayers to strange gods would have been an innovation that Aeschylus would not likely have introduced, nor is it likely that it would have been acceptable to his audience. Had he sacrificed illusion, as he often does in this play, and allowed them to pray to the Greek gods (the more probable course) it would have been repugnant to the Greeks to have heard the Persians pray to their Zeus for success against them, feeling—as keenly as they must have—the injustice of the Persian cause.

In the *Septem* there is dramatic illusion, whether Eteocles addressed citizens who accompanied him to the stage, or the audience, as Cadmean citizens. If the latter, his exposition is direct, it is true, but there is the illusion that his audience is the Theban assembly. Such an introduction is a distinct advance over the primitive one with its undramatic directness. In the *Prometheus Bound*, Aeschylus treats us to an exposition which is even more artistic, and which is Shakespeare's favorite method of introduction. He lets Kratos and Hephaistos in a dialogue give the necessary information—in fact, does more than that—puts our sympathy altogether on the side of the hero who is being bound, and lays the foundation stones for the atmosphere of the whole piece. Just as effective, though much shorter, is that perfect soliloquy which introduces the Agamemnon. The faithful watchman on the roof gives in homely, picturesque language the facts; he makes us sympa-

thize<sup>90</sup> with Agamemnon; and in a few masterful words lets that cloud of dread fall upon us which never lifts during the whole play. The introduction to the *Choephoroi* is equally artistic and, though some of it is lost, is very effective as it stands. Orestes' prayers, his placing of the lock of hair and his soliloquy,<sup>91</sup> acquaint the audience with the situation and at once win them to the cause of vengeance which he represents. In the *Eumenides* we have two long soliloquies of the priestess. In the first, we learn that she prays to the gods of the fane and country before performing her daily priestly duties; in the second, after her re-appearance from the temple we have a soliloquy—one of the most effective descriptions in literature.

Let us now sum up Aeschylus' introductions in the light of his dramatic art and possible innovations. In the *Persians* we have a primitive introduction; but, barring this parados, we probably have no other introduction to a play of Aeschylus of the primitive character; for in the *Suppliants* the tragedian consciously shunned such a frank introduction, and in such avoidance was quite successful. Furthermore, we may add (though this we can not prove) that it may well have been he who invented the two innovations, (1) dramatic illusion for introductions, and—as a step thereto—(2) the assignment of the introductory matter to an actor or actors. It appears, therefore, that Aeschylus taught the world the artistic introduction of a play. Furthermore, though his successor, Sophocles, used dialogue more frequently, he has given us introductions no less artistic and effective. As is well known, Euripides in this regard presents a distinct deterioration.

<sup>90</sup>A fact which certain critics have ignored in their estimation of the portrayal of his character.

<sup>91</sup>For such it seems, although Pylades (the mute) is present and addressed in the last two verses.

## SPEECHES.

I shall now consider various speeches: some, with reference to their dramatic use; others, with reference to their dramatic propriety. Naturally, there was much less action on the Greek stage than on the modern. This was chiefly due to the fact that the Greek dramatist generally dealt only with the result or catastrophe of a certain series of events, while the modern dramatist usually includes in his action what preceded the Greek play, viz., the growth of a portentous passion and the deed or crime;<sup>92</sup> but it was also due to the lesser number of lines at the disposal of the ancient playwright for the development of his action. Even in a trilogy, if he did have as much space as Shakespeare for his Macbeth, he gave much of it to his chorus, which furnished little that can be called action; therefore his space for spoken parts was still limited. It follows, then, since the possibilities for direct portrayal were contracted, that speeches descriptive of an action were continually used in Greek tragedy, when we should prefer, and on a modern stage get, the action itself. The fact that, in Aeschylus' early period, the actors were only two and the stage machinery meager, and also that, even in later days, modern ensemble scenes were out of the question for the Greek stage, were added reasons why we often find action, *e. g.*, a battle scene, epically described instead of tragically acted.

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<sup>92</sup>For the two methods of dramatic construction, see Freytag, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-109; also pp. 155-157. There are exceptions, of course, to the generalization I have just made. In *Antigone* we find (1) a stated determination, (2) the deed or climax, and (3) the catastrophe. In Aeschylus' extant trilogy we see (1) the wrong, (2) the complication, and (3) the adjustment.



In this case the dramatic effect depended on the power of the poet in his descriptions; and, since it was drama and not epic he was composing, much also depended on his skill in dramatically excusing the long speeches—thus making them natural and reasonable. There are a number of passages in Aeschylus that are interesting from this latter point of view, and I purpose to take them up under two categories with reference to their dramatic use.

*Speeches justifying speech instead of action.*—Under this head I have found three examples: two in the Septem and one in the Choephoroi. To the first and last no attention (so far as I know) has been called, though the second is noticed in two editions.<sup>93</sup> Beginning with verse 55 of the Septem the messenger says:

κληρουμένους δ' ἔλειπον, ὥς πάλῃ λαχὼν  
ἕκαστος αὐτῶν πρὸς πύλας ἄγοι λόχον.

He is explaining why the hostile army has not arrived for attack, as soon as he himself for the delivery of his message. I think Aeschylus also intended the speech to naturalize the scene between Eteocles and the chorus (181-287), which immediately follows the choral ode. It is true, we gather from the chorus' words that a slight skirmish has already begun, by verse 158, of which further mention is made in 298; but the battle is stayed—the foemen are drawing lots for their respective posts at the gates. Eteocles may therefore be spared from the army for a few minutes during his colloquy with the choreutae. Here perhaps Aeschylus has met the requirements of an audience or first-reading; on the other hand, a critic may study the passage and come to the conclusion that there were greater demands on Eteocles than the one of his attention.

<sup>93</sup>See the note of Flagg on 378, and Tucker's note on the same verse numbered 365.

We find a second instance in verses 378-379:

\* \* \* πόρον δ' Ἴσμηνὸν οὐκ ἔᾶ περὶ  
ὁ μάντις· οὐ γὰρ σφάγια γίγνεται καλὰ.

This is an evident attempt of the poet (in the face of the conditions of war) to justify the long descriptions of the opposing warriors which follow. Eteocles is present again, having returned to the stage after making preparations for defense (see 283-287). This attempt meets with some success—just what measure each reader must determine for himself; but, for us, it certainly cannot altogether dramatically justify the long epic element. To the Greek audience, however, I believe it gave little offense, so accustomed were they to the recitation of Homeric battles, where the combatants not only before but even during an engagement took part in long and unnatural conversation.<sup>94</sup> That some small part of the spectators may have taken exception, is quite likely from those well known lines of Euripides in his *Phoenissae* (751-752), if these lines are really his; where, evidently intending to criticize this situation in Aeschylus, he makes Eteocles say:

ὄνομα δ' ἐκάστου διατριβὴν πολλὴν ἔχει,  
ἐχθρῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῖς τείχεσιν καθημένων.

Euripides, accordingly, did not present his messenger's account (*Phoenissae* 1090-1199) until after the battle.

In the *Choephoroi* (510-511) we find the third example, where Aeschylus consciously, I think, justifies speech instead of action. Here the chorus before urging immediate action excuses the long *kommos*, 307-478 (together with the less extended prayers of Orestes and Electra which follow), by calling it "a payment to the tomb for its dirge denied"—an

<sup>94</sup>Compare the long colloquy of Glaucus and Diomed in Il. 6, 123-231, which took place during an engagement.

excuse which can hardly satisfy the modern reader, to whom the long dirgeful cries grow monotonous, but which may have been quite sufficient for the Greek. To him no doubt this ritual meant far more than it does to us, who have no key for its full understanding and significance.

*Speeches (indicating or arousing interest) used by the poet to justify long narrative passages.*—Two such speeches are found in the Septem, the rest naturally enough being confined to the Prometheus. In the Septem (451) we read: λέγ' ἄλλον ἄλλαις ἐν πύλαις εἰληχότα. The messenger has already described at length two of the besieging warriors; so in these words Aeschylus makes the king indicate his interest in a further recital,—thus, in a measure at least, justifying it. At the end of the next speech of the king we find a similar device (480): κόμπαζ' ἐπ' ἄλλω, μηδέ μοι φθόνει λόγων. Here there is not only urgency—the messenger must not stint the tale; so the fourth recital is given. But neither at the close of Eteocles' next speech nor later does the poet give a like exhortation; feeling, perhaps, since he has gotten the individual descriptions well started, that the audience will take the other three<sup>95</sup> for granted. Furthermore, as has often been noticed, there is variety of delineation in the last part of the messenger's account, and a climax of interest which needs no verbal encouragement, viz., the dread thought: "So the king is to be pitted against his brother and then—the curse!—ah! —the curse!"

In the Prometheus we have a number of such speeches which indicate interest on the part of Prometheus' interlocutors; also speeches of the Titan himself, which are intended to pique curiosity—that of the audience as well as of his stage-listeners. In 625, 627 and 629 we read Io's insistence that Prometheus tell her "what sorrow remaineth?"—a question

<sup>95</sup>They had already been apprised of the fact that there were seven hostile war-leaders.

which she had asked in 604 ff. and re-asked in 622-623.<sup>96</sup> The poet evidently introduces this insistence because his hero had already had five extended speeches, and he feels that only such importunity can justify continuation. He, however, realizing the value of variety and suspense in a drama of marked epic proportions, does not allow the Titan to speak at once. The coryphaeus interposes to ask for Io's own story first. At its conclusion Io again for the third time asks her question (683-684). But even so the poet will not permit the hero to speak. Prometheus first arouses curiosity by verses 696 and 697:

πρῶ γε στενάξεις καὶ φόβου πλέα τις εἶ·  
ἐπίσχες ἔστ' ἂν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ προσημιάης.

Then—and only after the chorus have added the weight of their insistence (698-699)—he begins the story of Io's wandering. As we have seen, the poet caused Prometheus to be asked four times and by both parties, Io and the coryphaeus, before he would allow his acquiescence; and, now that he has allowed him to speak, he may only tell the story by half. Feeling that a recital of the whole tale in one telling would be putting too great a demand upon the patience and interest of his audience, he causes Prometheus to break off at 740 with

\* \* \* οὐζ γὰρ νῦν ἀκήκοας λόγους,  
εἶναι δοκεῖ σοὶ μηδέπω 'ν προσημίαις.

By these words and also verses 743 and 744 (τί που δράσσεις, ὅταν τὰ λοιπὰ πυνθάνη κακά;) the Titan piques curiosity<sup>97</sup> again

<sup>96</sup>It was re-asked because Io's wonder had led her to interrupt her previous question by another as to the cause of Prometheus' punishment (614).

<sup>97</sup>In wonder he is asked by the Coryphaeus in 745 whether he has more to tell; and incites the more wonder by his reply in the next verse that he has yet to tell of a "storm-tost sea of trouble."

—without satisfying it at once, however, as the tragedian was too good an artist to make such a mistake. Instead he introduces into the conversation that all-engrossing subject, the fall of Zeus. When this secret of Prometheus has been developed to the point he wishes, Aeschylus, preparatory to breaking off the dialogue, causes him again to pique the curiosity of his interlocutors (and the audience) by verse 776: καὶ μηδὲ σαρπηρὶ γ' ἐκμαθεῖν ζήτει πόνους. By this means he turns the subject from himself to Io, and prompts a renewal of interest in her own future, which at once crystallizes into her request of 777, μή μοι προτείνων κέρδος εἴτ' ἀποστέροι.

Still Prometheus will not yield until he has again most provokingly aroused curiosity by verse 778, in which he intimates that he has two interesting disclosures to make, the one or the other of which he will probably withhold. At last, under importunity, he reveals one part of his story, the future wanderings of Io (786-818). So it is only after he has piqued curiosity four or five times, and been literally begged by Io as well as by the chorus for a further recital, that he will resume—a resumption itself broken in half at verse 818; for despite the keen Greek relish for geographical data, Aeschylus felt that this last long recital (786-876) would gain by interruption. Moreover, this interruption is but the final solicitation of the chorus for the other story, if the first be finished. The Titan now takes up this other tale about his releaser Heracles (844-876), after, however, first outlining Io's journey before she had reached the stage—a narrative itself which he is careful to justify by 824 ff.

These passages in the Septem and Prometheus are a sufficient indication that Aeschylus felt the difficulty on which the epic drama was likely to ground, and that he has taken care to introduce variety in long<sup>98</sup> narrative passages, and to

<sup>98</sup>For an interesting discussion of long speeches, see Freytag, op. cit., pp. 144-145.

justify them by speeches which often also arouse interest and hold attention.

*Five speeches justifying a previous silence.*—In the *Persians* (290 ff.) Aeschylus evidently feels called upon to justify Atossa's silence (249-289). Here the reason assigned is "overcoming grief." Dignan<sup>99</sup> attributes this apology to the awkwardness the poet felt in the preceding dialogue—one of two parts excluding the queen. But the interesting point to me is: why did Aeschylus feel a possible awkwardness in the silence? I do not believe any modern reader feels it. Indeed, quite to the contrary, he feels with Masqueray,<sup>100</sup> Girard,<sup>101</sup> and Prickard<sup>102</sup> that the silence is a fine dramatic touch. From our modern standpoint an apology is certainly gratuitous. But Aeschylus gave one, and I believe the reason is not far to seek. So far as we know from extant plays this was his first attempt at dramatic silence;<sup>103</sup> and, being an innovation, it needed a word of explanation, else its use here might have been misunderstood. No doubt, by the time of the production of the *Persians*, forced silences, if also awkward, as those of Danaus in the *Suppliants*, were distasteful to the more cultivated part of the Greek audience; and doubtless severe criticisms had been passed upon them. Aeschylus, therefore, when, from choice and not necessity, employing a silence in a later play, wished the dramatic (inner) reason for its introduction distinctly understood. Now Dignan is undoubtedly right in emphasizing Aeschylus' fondness for two-part dialogues, and may be right in explaining the silence

<sup>99</sup>Op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>100</sup>Théorie des formes lyriques de la tragédie grecque, pp. 135 ff.

<sup>101</sup>Revue des études grecques, VIII (1895), p. 119.

<sup>102</sup>See the note in his edition on 290.

<sup>103</sup>Silences had, of course, occurred before, as in the *Suppliants*, but they were probably forced on the poet, who had as yet found no means to relieve their awkwardness.



in the following way:<sup>104</sup> "We have a regular scheme of two-line speeches by the messenger, interspersed with strophe and antistrophe by the chorus. Atossa would have disturbed this neat balance, had she spoken." It may, then, possibly have been an external reason which influenced Aeschylus in this early play to neglect one of his personages, whether the coryphaeus or Atossa. Now which should it be? To Aeschylus there could be but one answer: the one who could be silent on strong and sufficient inner ground. Atossa, therefore, was chosen for this silence. It only remains to be added that the poet justified it in the passage under discussion by stating this satisfying inner ground, lest some less discerning critic should observe the silence, and failing to discover the inner, should attribute to the outer reason its introduction.

In the Septem 866 ff. Tucker<sup>105</sup> is probably right in assuming that we have another apology for silence. I quote his note: "These words serve as an explanation of the prolonged silence of the sisters after appearing upon the stage. The chorus will act like the *θρήνων ἑξαρχοι* in Il. 24, 720." This *kommos* seems to have been a part of the Greek ritual; so the chorus (866 ff.) justify it to the exclusion of conversation, which we might expect on the entrance of two new characters.<sup>106</sup>

There is another apology for silence in the *Prometheus* (101 ff.—especially 106-108):

ἀλλ' οὔτε σιγᾶν οὔτε μὴ σιγᾶν τύχας  
οἶόν τέ μοι τάσδ' ἐστί. θνητοῖς γὰρ γέρα  
πορῶν ἀνάγκαις ταῖσδ' ἐνέξευγμαι τάλας.

Here but for these verses an unfavorable critic would have

<sup>104</sup>Op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>105</sup>In his note.

<sup>106</sup>At the close of *Antigone* we have a lament (*kommos*) between the chorus and Creon, but there they address each other and there is, of course, no silence to be explained.

much ground for attributing it solely to external necessity, as Prometheus<sup>107</sup> made the third actor in the first extant play, as is well known, in which such an actor was introduced.<sup>108</sup> But Aeschylus has anticipated such a critic's adverse judgment by the Titan's apology for silence—which is the poet's inner and complete vindication.

As an addendum to the consideration of this passage I wish to take exception to a statement made by Dignan<sup>109</sup> with reference to Prometheus' silence. I quote: "Was this done deliberately for artistic effect, as is often said, or was it the result of practical limitations? The question seems settled by the fact that neither in the scene itself nor in the monologue that follows, is there any reference to the silence as a sign of Prometheus' pride. To plan such an effect and carry it out without calling attention to it by explicit mention might accord well enough with modern methods, but it is absolutely un-Aeschylean, not to say un-Greek." I agree that it would be "un-Aeschylean to plan such an effect without calling attention to it," but the fact is—in my opinion—the poet has called attention to it by the verses under discussion in the monologue. The Titan says: "I am not able to be silent about these misfortunes (as I was a while ago) nor to give them expression (as I am now trying to do)," and the following verse and one half give his reason—a sense of outrage at his treatment. These three verses, together with *καίτοι τί φημι*; (101), wherein he chides himself for momentary weakness, it seems to me, sufficiently refer to the

<sup>107</sup>Granting throughout this criticism that Prometheus was a living actor—a view to which I most strongly subscribe.

<sup>108</sup>It would have been difficult for the poet (even had he wished) to keep all three actors engaged in conversation. Even in the *Oresteia* there is seldom a three-part dialogue, and he was never so successful with it as his successor, Sophocles.

<sup>109</sup>Op. cit., p. 23.

silence as a sign of pride—and scorn, even. Finally, the denial of pride and self-will (436-437) as causes of his second silence in this play, may indicate that they were, indeed, the causes of his first silence.

As just intimated, we have another silence explained in the same play (436 ff.):

μή τοι χλιδῇ δοκεῖτε μηδ' αὐθαδία  
σιγᾶν με· συννοία δὲ δάπτομαι κέαρ,  
ὄρων ἑμαυτὸν ὧδε προσελούμενον.

Prometheus gives as his reason for delay in fulfilling his promise of 275, not pride and self-will (of which he had been accused by Oceanus and, in a milder way, by the chorus), for the pride which he vaunted in Zeus' face would have become him ill if exhibited toward his friends, the Oceanides, but a heart gnawed with anger at his punishment. This is a splendid reason for his silence and completely conceals the external reason for its interposition, viz., that the stasimon might be rendered. Here Aeschylus shows—what the scholiast (M) remarks<sup>110</sup>—that not only are pride and self-will inner grounds for silence, but brooding thoughts of a wrong as well.

There are in the Agamemnon (1064-1068) verses of Clytemnestra which explain Cassandra's long silence. I am not sure that Aeschylus consciously added them to justify or give inner grounds for this silence, but it may well be in view of similar explanations that he did. Here the silence of the prophetess was forced on the poet by the conditions of the

<sup>110</sup>Σιωπῶσι παρὰ ποιηταῖς τὰ πρόσωπα, ἢ δι' αὐθαδίαν, ὥς 'Αχιλλεὺς Αἰσχύλῳ, κ. τ. λ. Of about the same content is the commentary of ἐν τοῖς Φρῆξι Αἰσχύλου· ἢ διὰ τὴν συμφορὰν, ὥς ἡ Νιόβη παρ' Eustathius on Homer, Od. 23, 115. The same scholiast on Il. 24, 162, makes the well-known statement that Aeschylus was initiating Homer in such silences.

plot<sup>111</sup> rather than by his two-part preference; but, I believe, another reason, quite as compelling to Aeschylus, caused its introduction—the dramatic effect sure to follow; and, in the above words, he has hinted at the naturalness of this silence, thus successfully warding off all criticisms<sup>112</sup> which unduly urge the external reason.

*Speeches in the Persians sacrificing illusion for the sake of their effect.*—The most of these have been noticed in the criticisms and editions, but (to the best of my knowledge) have not been collated. In general they are not used because of demands of the plot for the development of the action, but are introduced for their own sake (whether probable or not) to gratify an immediate end—the patriotism of the audience. I shall attempt to do little more than enumerate the examples, with an occasional comment. In verses 71 and 72 the Persian elders speak of the pontoon bridge of their king from the Greek rather than from the Persian standpoint. Again in 93-94 a common Greek standpoint is again assumed and one which, I believe, is hardly Persian. A like example of thought transference may be found in 101 ff. This strophe is quite natural to a Greek, who looked upon himself as master of the sea, but certainly un-Persian. From the oriental point of view no such land limits could have been placed upon a Persian monarch's ambition.

The question is: Are these verses to be considered slips on the part of Aeschylus, or are we to regard them as justifiable—indeed, indispensable—because his audience was Greek? Doubtless we must conclude the latter. Inasmuch as his audience was Greek, he was compelled to speak to them in Greek terms; he was forced, in some measure, to interpret the thoughts and motives of the other side in Greek expressions, else to his audience the play would have lacked reality and

<sup>111</sup>See Allen, loc. cit., p. 271.

<sup>112</sup>See Dignan's criticism, op. cit., p. 26.

failed in its purpose.<sup>113</sup> The two Io episodes, with their contradictory journeys (in the Suppliants and Prometheus), prove that Aeschylus' own knowledge of Asiatic geography was scant and faulty. Indeed several historical mis-statements (although some statements, of course, may have been consciously twisted to suit his own dramatic ends) show that his knowledge of Persian history was far from accurate. He had no Herodotus for consultation as have we. Therefore we must not assume a very accurate geographical or historical knowledge on the part of either Aeschylus or his audience. He was, consequently, able to take liberties with places and personages which may seem to us rather strange. A certain range of liberties with facts, then, we shall take for granted. In the passages already cited it is the Persian side of the picture before us, but on it are written Greek letters. In 231 Atossa asks a question not called for by the development of the plot (*i. e.*, which is not naturally brought about by the actors themselves<sup>114</sup>), for she was cognizant of the information she requested.<sup>115</sup> But this unlikely question and the succeeding questions were more than excused by the Athenian audience on hearing the answers. They were asked with intent to glorify Athens, and had no dramatic justification. In a patriotic drama like the Persians, however, dramatic propriety must be sacrificed occasionally to patriotic effect. I quote Prickard's note: "Point by point the questioner has drawn out all the distinctive points of pride in her son's enemies: their men; their resources; and now their national weapon." Furthermore, the points lead in each case to a corresponding disparagement of the Persians.

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<sup>113</sup>For some of the general principles governing the laying of a plot in foreign lands, consult Freytag, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>114</sup>See Richter, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>115</sup>Verse 348 shows this, as well as verses 474-475. See the notes in Prickard's edition.

There is like reason for the marked enthusiasm (see especially 429-432) which the messenger shows as he recounts to the Persians (but really to the Athenians) the disaster at Salamis. Most unjustifiable from a dramatic standpoint, it was yet most acceptable to the audience, many of whom were veterans who had fought in the battle by the poet's side. The following references give the verses of the herald, which from the Greek view-point furnish grim touches on the defeat: 305, 307, 316 and 317, 319, 325 (note the contrast between εὐτυχῶς and εὐειδής in the preceding line), 337 and 344 (where the numerical superiority of the Persian force is dwelt on at unnecessary length), 384 and 385, 424 to 426, 462 and 463; also in 349 there is an unusually fine touch, where the messenger, in answer to the preceding question, speaks wholly out of character. Any real Persian herald could and would have (truthfully) answered: "Athens is destroyed." Not so the actor here, who exclaims: "Athens is not destroyed, for she is surrounded by the bulwarks of her men."

We have another transference of a Greek idea in the θεῶν φθόνον (362). Verses 402-405 are altogether gratuitous additions for the gratification of the Athenians. Another unlikely utterance is κλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν (474); yet so marked an appreciation of Athens, coming from Xerxes' mother (especially after her pretended ignorance of 231), that it must have been especially gratifying. Verses 707-708 are true and like Solon's advice to Croesus (Herod 1, 32): "but we hardly expect this gentle wisdom from a great Eastern despot, even with the melancholy of the world of shades upon his lips."<sup>116</sup> Again in 723 (and perhaps in 725) we have a transference of Greek thought. 783 is rather hard on Xerxes, who was merely carrying out the projects left unfinished by Darius. Here Aeschylus may have been ignorant of the fact, or he

<sup>116</sup>Prickard's note on 708.



may have consciously changed it, as he wished to express the lessons of the war, and incidentally, of the drama, through the lips of the ghost, whose utterance would naturally carry more than earthly authority. If the poet changed the facts (as he knew them), there must have been divergence of opinion among the people to allow such change. The speech of Darius (805-831) is very un-Persian. He tells the elders that at Plataea the Persians will meet the punishment due to their insolence and sacrilege, for Zeus will not clear the presumptuous. When we come to Xerxes' speech, in like manner, we find grim touches of unlikely utterance but of keen relish to the listeners in the theatre. Verses 974-977, "Ah me, beholding ancient, hateful Athens, they (the Persian marines), all lie flapping (as fish) and gasping, poor fellows, on the dry land," the real Xerxes could never have spoken. From 1017 to 1022 we have a somewhat undue emphasis on the quiver—the only thing the king says he has been able to save out of all his vast equipment. In 1023 he is most drily comforted by the elders. Again in 1025 occurs a statement unnaturally added for effect.

Of course, the primary purpose of Aeschylus in this drama was not to raise a laugh at the expense of the Persians or to hold a conquered enemy in derision, but to show a monarch fallen from far heights to low depths, because of his ὕβρις in the sight of heaven. He did not, however, refrain from these unlikely speeches already mentioned—touches—asides—which made the play of much more interest to his audience. That many of the spectators were filled with an exultant spirit when Xerxes entered and delivered himself in the ridiculous scene that followed, is evident from a passage of Aristophanes (Frogs, 1026-1029). In my opinion, the whole audience<sup>117</sup> was pleased and the poet would have missed his patri-

<sup>117</sup>Patriotism blinded their eyes to dramatic defects, just as it had soothed Aeschylus' conscience when he wrote.

otic purpose had he denied them the last scene. As Prickard<sup>118</sup> well says: "There is a double point of view throughout; the ideal spectator must now place himself at Susa, and now remember that he is sitting in the theatre at Athens, with Salamis before his eyes." Such a spectator (who was in fact the Athenian himself), despite the violation of dramatic proprieties, could hardly have failed thoroughly to appreciate the Persians.<sup>119</sup>

*Speeches transcending the knowledge of the speaker.*—There are few cases that can come up even for consideration in this category, and, perhaps, only one may be established. I suppose, therefore, that there is hardly a dramatic poet less guilty in this regard.

In the Suppliants 291-333 there is no assignment of persons for speeches in the Mss., so we are left to conjecture. In 308 of the standard text we have a statement of the king in which his knowledge of the name οἶστον has been called in question. How, it is said, would he know the word for gad-fly in parts about the Nile? Hermann accordingly has substituted Ἰνάχου for Νείλου of the codd. The king might, however, have heard the name from some traveler and treasured it, since it concerned the story of so well known a personage. But all this is beside the mark if we accept the assignment of parts by Tucker. In his edition this speech falls naturally from the lips of the Danaides. On the whole I prefer Tucker's text, as, among other points in its favor, it requires the assumption of but one lacuna (between 315 and 317). This verse, therefore, has by no means a clear case for admittance under this head.

In the Persians (277) the words πλαγκτοῖς ἐν διπλάκασιν have been suspected and variously emended, because they con-

<sup>118</sup>In his Introduction, p. xxviii.

<sup>119</sup>We know from a statement in the Hypothesis, that Aeschylus won the prize with the trilogy to which this play belonged.

tain a descriptive touch which would more naturally come from an eye witness than from the chorus. Hermann translates: "Wrapped in their long sea coats which wander up and down on the sea." Others translate: "Among the wandering sea planks (sea-wreckage)." If the text be right, it is a minute bit of description on the part of the chorus, which is hardly a legitimate inference from the two preceding verses of the herald, and so may be properly placed under this category of speeches. It is, however, if genuine, a defect of the very slightest magnitude, as only a critic's microscope could find it. It would scarcely present itself to a listener in the theatre.

In the Persians (796 ff.) we seem to find a certain example for this category. Darius, who on his appearance (in 681), had had no knowledge of Salamis (see 693), here prophesies the defeat at Plataea. In fact, it was largely for the divulgence of this information, I think, that Aeschylus brought on his ghost. But, so far as I know from passages<sup>120</sup> in extant Greek literature bearing on dead spirits and their knowledge, Darius trespasses on probability here when he shows such intimate acquaintance with earthly events of the future. In Homer (*Od.* XI) Tiresias, of course, could prophesy, though dead, for prophesy had been his office in life; but all of the other ghosts were as ignorant of the future as of the present state of their loved ones on earth. Achilles, though a prince among the dead, just as Darius (see 691), knew naught of his son's welfare until assured by Ulysses. Of course, Aeschylus may have had some warrant for Darius' prophesy which we do not now possess, but this prophetic speech seems to belong here in classification.<sup>121</sup>

In yet another passage (745-746) Darius speaks what he can hardly be presumed to know. This is before he begins

<sup>120</sup>See the *Od.* XI; and Aristotle's *Ethics*, I, 10-11.

<sup>121</sup>See Prickard's note on 800.

to prophesy, so we shall have to limit his information here at least to ordinary channels.<sup>122</sup> He says:

ὅστις Ἑλλήσποντον ἱρὸν δοῦλον ὥς δεσμώμασιν  
ἵλπισε σχήσιν ῥέοντα, Βόσπορον ῥέον θεοῦ.

Now 722 is his only possible source of information, so he seems to infer from this verse a little more than is warranted, as δεσμώμασιν (745) is more specific than μηχαναῖς (722). Doubtless Aeschylus gave this statement to Darius because of the common story of the scourging of the Hellespont, which Herodotus later gathered into his history. This again is scarcely a defect, and rather concerns a laboratory and microscope than the spectator of drama.

To two passages in the *Agamemnon* my attention has been called as possibly belonging here. The first is the long description of Clytemnestra (320 ff.). This, however, seems to me nothing more than an imaginative picture which Clytemnestra drew of the situation at Troy,—a general description which any person of vivid imagination might have drawn on the information of a city's capture. I am the more inclined to this view since Clytemnestra begins the picture with οἶμαι (321), "methinks."<sup>123</sup>

It is almost as doubtful whether the second instance can come under this head. In 587 Clytemnestra steps out of the palace to greet the herald. She has been off the stage since 350. In 590, however, she says:

<sup>122</sup>When Darius first appears in 681, his first question apparently betrays a complete ignorance of Persian history after his death.

<sup>123</sup>On page 342 of his introduction Verrall gives an opposite view; I quote: "The queen, in short, knows so much that it becomes an interesting enquiry how much exactly she knows, and what is the source of her knowledge. In fact, he urges this knowledge (unlikely, he takes it, according to the traditional interpretation of the play) as a point in favor of his theory of the *Agamemnon*."

καί τίς μ' ἐνίπων εἶπε, 'φρυκτωρῶν δία  
πεισθεῖσα Τροίαν νῦν πεπορθηθῆναι δοκεῖς;  
ἦ κάρτα πρὸς γυναικὸς αἰρεσθαι κέαρ.'

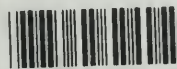
This remark would at once be referred by the audience to the incredulity of the chorus in 483 ff. But how could Clytemnestra know of this, as she was not on the stage at the time? Verrall answers by saying that the queen has set spies to watch the elders and report within. Sidgwick says in his note: "The chorus only express the general feeling of the citizens, which she can naturally be supposed to learn." At the worst, it is but a slight slip which we may be sure never occurred to Aeschylus' audience.

As we have just seen, instances of passages where a knowledge transcending that of the speaker is found, are exceedingly hard to find. In the *Persians* there is probably one instance, with possibly three others of very slight importance. Another little slip may possibly be found in the *Agamemnon*; but after several re-readings, I have been unable to add to these examples. A consideration of this classification, therefore, adds rather than detracts from our estimation of the poet.





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